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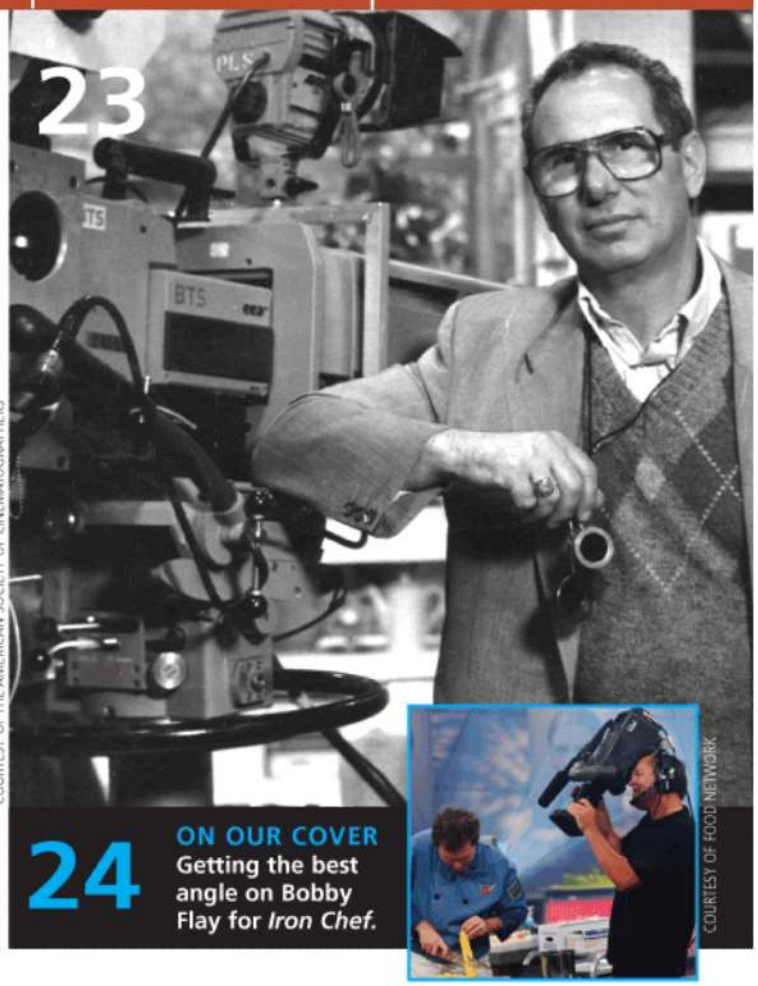

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LULL BEFORE THE STORM

It's hard to believe, but NAB is right around the corner (April 11-17). And just as everyone has started to get the feel of all the new tools and innovations introduced during the annual Las Vegas confab last year (and added upon at IBC in Amsterdam), an entirely new crop of "toys" is on the verge of being unveiled.

In the hope of helping *DV* readers navigate their way though the coming deluge, we're planning a two-pronged approach to our NAB coverage: A preview piece in our April issue — outlining the trends that will run through the show in terms of cameras, storage, editing, et al — and a separate, all-NAB special publication that will itself be offered (with much fanfare, of course) at the event. The core of this "13th issue" of *DV* will be a company-by-company report on the manufacturers and developers offering our readership their latest and greatest.

Of note is that *Videography* editor Cristina Clapp and myself will also be working with the *NAB Daily* during the show, helping to bring our respective perspectives to the event's twice-daily official publication. Meanwhile, we and our team of contributors in attendance will be scoping out products to honor with our publications' "best-in-show" awards. These awards will recognize the new tools that we feel will best serve our readers.

DV's honorees, given the Black Diamond Award (in tune with our diamond-based rating system), will be profiled in-depth in a subsequent issue and online.

In the meantime, this issue will give you something to chew on for the scant weeks before NAB — almost literally, as contributor Matt Jeppsen's cover story details the making of the endlessly inventive Food Network show *Iron Chef America*. As you'll read, the foodie favorite remains in standard-definition though the production is fully high-def capable. Yes, the producers have their reasons for this, but, more importantly, the situation serves as a symbol of the technological era we find ourselves in: one foot in the HD future, the other still in the SD past. But I suppose one foot must be in front of the other at some point for any forward progress to be made.

Elsewhere in the issue, Roy Chapman, chairman of the Wedding and Event Videographer Association (WEVA), further detail an evolutionary phenomenon considered in our last few issues: the convergence of still photography and videography. (See "Two For One?," page 8.)

"We see the continuing "convergence" of digital technologies as a good thing," Chapman describes, "as we feel it will open up more, not less, business opportunities for professional videographers."

It'll be interesting to see how this progression plays out, and how new technologies introduced at NAB next month may foster the further convergence of certain production and post positions.

The only thing that's certain is change.

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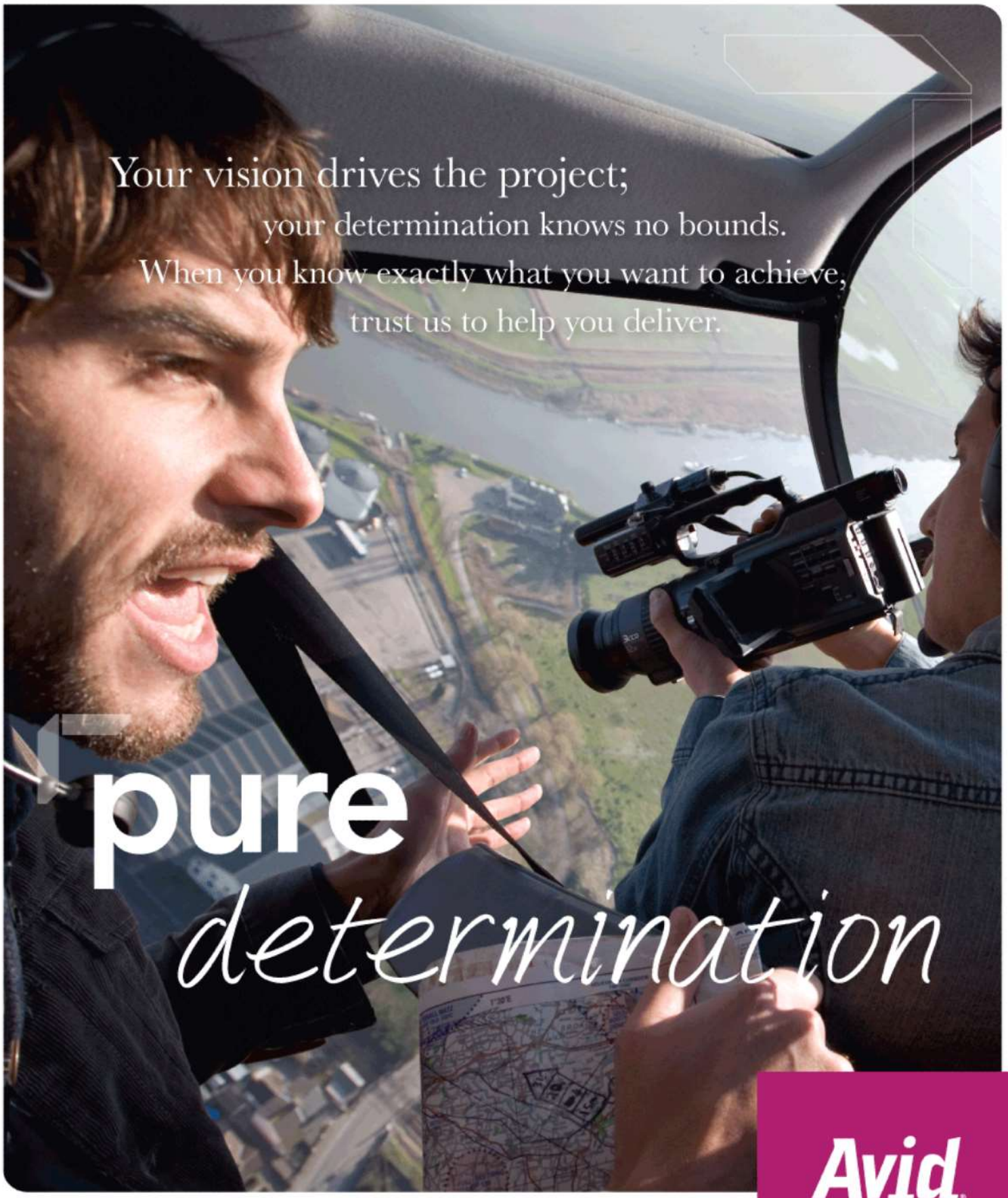
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Setting up a car rig with the HVX200 while shooting *Anywhere U.S.A.*

TAKING THE P2 ROUTE TO SUNDANCE

When choosing a camera for his debut feature *Anywhere, U.S.A.*, filmmaker Anthony "Chusy" Haney-Jardine selected Panasonic's AG-HVX200, reasoning that "the project just might be seen somewhere." That "somewhere" for *Anywhere* turned out to be one of the film industry's most coveted stages, the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah (held January 17-27), where the feature had its world premiere in the 2008 Dramatic Competition.

Told in three segments, *Anywhere, U.S.A.* examines American manners, prejudices and family dynamics. The movie was directed and written by Haney-Jardine, who shares the screenwriting credit with his wife, producer Jennifer MacDonald.

The director of photography was Patrick Rousseau, an operator on such TV series as *Mad Men, Six Feet Under* and *Arrested Development*.

Haney-Jardine purchased two HVX200s for the *U.S.A.* production (one used solely for backup). The project was shot on location in Asheville, North Carolina, in "fits and bursts" throughout 2006 and 2007 to accommodate Rousseau's busy schedule.

The director emphasized that, despite its independent film pedigree, *Anywhere, U.S.A* was shot classically, with a tripod (Cartoni Focus Fluid Head System), formal lighting (HMIs and Kino Flos), and a full complement of jibs (Glidecam Camcrane 200) and dollies. A Panasonic BT-LH1700W LCD monitor was used for on-set monitoring and shot framing.

"One would expect an HD camera to respond well to underexposure, but I was afraid of shooting exteriors, which we had a lot of," says Rousseau. "I really wanted to use the sun as a backlight, and it turned out that the camera handled the hot backlight beautifully, keeping detail where I expected there to be none.

"The default color rendition was a little too saturated for the look of this movie, but we were able to dial it down easily in the menus," he continues. "The ability to manipulate the look in the menus is an incredible feature. We were able to come up with a look that was perfect through the use of the film gamma settings and taking down the color saturation.

"As with dynamic range, I was initially skeptical of the HVX200's off-speed feature, but after shooting tests, I saw how beautiful it was and we used it several times," Rousseau continued. "The variable frame rates are a great asset. I was also a little anxious about the tapeless P2 system, thinking that it would be too delicate for shooting in extreme weather conditions in the mountains of North Carolina, but this also performed flawlessly."

Rousseau shot at 720p/24pN direct to P2 cards. "When one card became full, we would eject it and start ingesting to our AJ-PCS060G P2 store," Haney-Jardine says. "After ingesting, we would connect the P2 store via USB to a laptop and use the import P2 feature within Final Cut Pro.

"Our backup disk was always a 250GB OWC FW-800 external hard drive. We would repeat this process throughout the day, formatting cards after importing their contents."

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HD BELIEVERS

IKEGAMI HIGH-DEF CAMERAS USED FOR HDTV WORSHIP SERVICE.

At the Church at Pinnacle Hills, in Rogers, Arkansas, belief is powerfully conveyed in *Winners*, a weekly worship program featuring Pastor Ronnie Floyd that's carried on the Daystar Television Network. Recently, the Church upgraded to a 2,400 seat, entirely high-definition (HD) facility, outfitted with five Ikegami HDK-75EXBF portable HD cameras and two Ikegami HDL-40 box-style HD units. "When reaching out to such a large audience with such an important message, we felt that it was vital for us to have the best presentation for the program, which led us to upgrade to HD," explains Bryan Bailey, the Director of Media for the Church. "Of the various manufacturers, Ikegami provided us with the best quality at the most affordable price."

Director of Media Bryan Bailey with an HDK-75EXBF

Ikegami's HDK-75EXBF is a full-digital HDTV compact portable camera system that can be converted for studio use with either 5" or 9" viewfinders, and full studio lenses with the SE-H700 System Expander. Whether in a portable or studio configuration, the HDK-75EXBF provides strong HD image performance and sophisticated design, including an integrated fiber adapter. Three 2/3" 2,200,000-pixel IT CCDs achieve high image quality, with a resolution of 1,000 lines and a S/N ratio of 56dB.

The Church's assortment and arrangement of Ikegami HD cameras has been ideal for the production of *Winners*. "Four of our HDK-75EXBF cameras are on floor level, on the stage and in the audience to capture the service, with the fifth configured for jib use," Bailey notes. "Our HDL-40 box cameras are mounted on the edge of the balcony to shoot the baptisteries, which are up high. These cameras also allow us to get wide shots of the congregation and the choir."

TWO FOR ONE?

Q&A

From left, Chapman with 24 editor Haydar Adel and WEVA's Dan Argenas.

_DV:_ How do you see the jobs of event still photographers and videographers converging as cameras become capable of doing "double duty"?

ROY CHAPMAN: We see the "convergence" of digital technologies as a good thing, as we feel it will open up more, not less, business opportunities for professional videographers, especially WEVA members. It was a key reason for presenting WEVA's Wide World of Weddings & Events at the Photo Marketing Association '08 show in January. It was a whole new trade show developed for professional videographers due to the emergence of new digital technologies and new event video creativity.

What do you hear from WEVA members on this issue?

It's new ground for WEVA members, as it is for anyone in pro video. Once technologies are explained and add-on concepts described, it's fairly easy to understand how key aspects fit in with an existing video business and make it stronger, more attractive to customers, and more profitable. The question is, How do you implement and market? That's what the WEVA convention in January was all about. It's cutting-edge, which allows sharp-marketing videographers to get a competitive advantage in their market today, before it all becomes standard and widely available in the near future.

Still photographers and videographers have traditionally had separate job descriptions, but if one is to enter the job market in the next 3-5 years, what will be the expected skill set?

Actually, we're talking about *today!* A wedding and event videographer can take advantage of convergence now and expand their business today. Some of the new skills needed apply to postproduction applications, some apply to on-site coverage. For example, today, skilled videographers can now turn their digital stills into extra profits just by adding new low-cost gear or third-party outsourcing that produces tangible, "hard copies" of those stills. And that could be in an album or a book, a jigsaw puzzle... even event jewelry. This was all available and demonstrated at the WEVA/PMA convention in January. With still frames, when you're shooting video on site, there are techniques you can use with your video camera now to enhance the capture of stills that clients will want to buy.

(continued on page 49)

WEDDING AND EVENT VIDEOGRAPHER ASSOCIATION CHAIRMAN ROY CHAPMAN CONSIDERS THE CONVERGENCE OF STILL PHOTOGRAPHERS AND VIDEOGRAPHERS.

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SEMPER FI IN HIGH DEF

HONORING THE IMAGE OF THE U.S. MARINES IN HD.

Award-winning director/cameraman Bill Mills recently added Panasonic's new AJ-HPX3000 native 1080p camcorder to his company's growing collection of high-definition camera packages (purchased from Manhattan-based Abel Cine Tech).

Mills, president of Florida Film & Video and BMA Production Services, Inc. (both of St. Petersburg), is currently utilizing the HPX3000 on a production for the U.S. Marine Corps. "I made the decision in September to shoot this dramatic training program using the HPX3000 as our A camera and our trusty VariCam as the B camera," Mills says. "We added the AJ-HPM100 P2 Mobile (10-bit, 4:2:2 recorder/player) to our HD package, which is making our tapeless workflow much more efficient.

Marines take part in a training exercise shot by director/cameraman Bill Mills.

"Our goal with this production was to create an episodic-TV look," he adds. "It was imperative that the production have that 35mm film style and quality."

Mills shot the main segment of the Marine program in 1080/24p DVCPRO HD. "That gave us a look that I would describe as a notch up from the VariCam's 720p," he says. "The HPX3000 offers a number of gamma settings that emulate VariCam's Film-Rec

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look. Having only had the HPX3000 a short time, I've barely scratched the surface of its capabilities, but the advantage of shooting true 1980x1080 full-raster images is very much akin to comparing 35mm film to Super 16. Without a doubt, the HPX3000 will become our flagship for HD production.

"I'm particularly excited about using the HPX3000 in the new AVC-Intra 100 mode once that codec is fully supported by Apple and Avid," he continues. "From the initial tests we've done in AVC-Intra 100, I believe it will set a new standard for high-end HD production.

"Our initial first week of shooting on the Marine project netted more than nine hours of A-camera footage, which traditionally would have taken two or three days of digitizing in the old tape world," Mills says. "I was able to bring the media into our Final Cut Pro HD suite in less than seven hours.

"P2 skeptics complain about the cost of the P2 cards, but coming from a film background I just think of the cards as film magazines," he continues. "The 16GB cards hold 16 minutes of DVCPRO HD content [shot in 1080], whereas my old Aaton mags would only carry 10 minutes of film stock. The film mags cost more than $5,000 each and a 16GB card is about $800. Once content creators truly understand the workflow and realize the cards are not their masters, but should be used to move the media to mass storage drives, I foresee wide acceptance of the format and the attendant workflow." DV

MAKE THE ROUNDS

FIVE TOP EVENTS FOR THE ASPIRING INDIE'S CALENDAR

EVENT	VENUE	DEADLINE	PROGRAM	FEES	GIVE IT A SHOT?
8TH ANNUAL 3-MINUTE FILM FESTIVAL **http://3mff.com**	Santa Fe, New Mexico, April 18-20, 2008	Earlybird - Feb. 15; Regular - March 1	This shorts-only event unspools at the Screen at the College of Santa Fe. By limiting films to three minutes or less (including credits), the fest creates an opportunity for amateurs to hone their skills and for professionals to show off their chops.	Entry: $15	The question is: Are you up for a challenge? Three minutes is not a lot of time in the grand scheme of visual storytelling.
14TH ANNUAL BRAINWASH MOVIE FESTIVAL **www.brainwashm.com**	Oakland, California, July 11-12, 2008	Features: Earlybird - April 15 Shorts: Earlybird - April 15; Regular - May 1	A unique drive-in/bike-in/walk-in movie festival dedicated to promoting independently produced movies from around the world in innovative ways.	$20-$65	You get good exposure. If selected, Brainwash promotes your short- or feature-length film and even goes so far as to shop it at the American Film Market and Cannes. Brainwash also sells DVD compilations online.
28TH ANNUAL BRECKENRIDGE FESTIVAL OF FILM **www.breckfilmfest.com**	Breckenridge, Colorado, June 5-8, 2008	Earlybird - Feb. 15; Regular - March 1	The festival has shifted from fall to summer fare, meaning more comfortable outdoor screenings, and presents a varied array of independent films, premieres, receptions, educational programs and retrospectives high in the Colorado Rockies (as in mountains, not baseballs). Features Spiritual and Latin categories this year.	$45-$55	You can forego the bulky winter wear and enjoy clean, thin air. And if you just have to hit the slopes, you can do so on a mountain bike.
2ND ANNUAL GI FILM FESTIVAL **www.gifilmfestival.com**	Arlington, Virginia, May 14-18, 2008	Regular - Feb. 28; Late - March 15	The mission of the festival is to honor the successes and sacrifices of American GIs through the medium of film that in some way express the courage and selflessness of the men and women in uniform.	$40-$45	Held in the D.C. area during Armed Forces Weekend, it brings out the patriot in all of us.
11TH ANNUAL LONG ISLAND INTL. FILM EXPO **www.longislandfilm.com**	Bellmore, New York, July 9-17, 2008	Earlybird - Feb. 18; Regular - March 3	The fest features panels and a filmmaker breakfast. The Long Island category includes films made or partially shot in the area.	$20-$45	Distributors are known to comb the festival for pickups.

Compiled by Douglas Bankston. To have a film festival or event listed, e-mail information to dbankston@nbmedia.com.

BY NED SOLTZ

OPTICS OPTIONS

IMAGE-ENHANCING ADD-ONS AND ADAPTERS

	ITEM/ CONTACT	COMPANY	MSRP	WHAT IT IS	SPECS
	Brevis35 HD **www.cinevate.com**	Cinevate	$1,000 and up.	35mm adapter system.	The Brevis35 is a front-mounted adapter to facilitate use of 35mm lenses. This allows for cinema-style shooting, particularly in limiting depth of field, which is difficult with standard camcorder lenses. Cinevate sells an adapter with the mount for a specific camera and a mount for Canon, Pentax, Nikon or Minolta lenses.
	Letus35 **www.letusdirect.com**	Letus	$900-1,200.	35mm adapter system.	Letus offers three configurations, including economy (aluminum-milled body), mini (for small cameras like the Canon HV20) and extreme. The extreme model flips the image. You need to supply your own rails, mattebox or other accessories. Letus35 is an excellent budget option and has a significant following.
	Mini35 **www.pstechnik.de**	P+S Technik	$7,500 plus $2,500 for camera adapter.	35mm adapter system.	The quality is first-rate, and users who opt for this highest-end solution often pair it with high-end lenses like Zeiss primes. This is a total system that most users tend to rent. Rental rates run around $300 per day and up, depending upon your market. It doesn't get any better than this.
	M2 **www.redrockmicro.com**	Redrock Micro	$2,500 for HD package.	35mm adapter system.	Pricing varies depending upon the package. Redrock has just begun offering an optional flip module to combat the dreaded upside-down image. M2 is also often found in rental houses.
	Fixed 35mm lenses **www.eBay.com; www.craigslist.com**	Canon, Nikon, Pentax, Minolta	Used, $10 and up.	You can find bargains in used lenses from the pre-autofocus days. Just check the mount and take your chances online.	I'm suggesting eBay and Craigslist as two places to start looking for used 35mm lenses.
	Converter Lenses **www.16x9inc.com**	16x9	$500 and up.	Wide-angle and fisheye converter lenses for your fixed-mount small- and full-size camera lens.	Quality of glass is excellent. Remember that all these lenses make your camera front-heavy. Be careful of stress on your lens and if working on a tripod, be careful to adjust balance.
	Converter Lenses **www.schneideroptics.com**	Century Precision Options	$500 and up.	Century Precision is now a division of Schneider Optics. They offer a full line of adapter lenses for small- and larger-format cameras.	As a division of filter maker Schneider, the glass is excellent. In this product, as well as in all other add-on products, watch carefully for any vignetting at the widest angle.
	Prime Lenses **www.zeiss.com**	Zeiss	$ Very expensive	If you are working in a project destined for theatrical presentation, it is worth renting Zeiss primes for use with a compatible adapter like the P+S Technik.	Any DP will tell you that there's a difference. Prime lens, by the way, means single focal length. You usually don't zoom-in while making films; you dolly. Once again, this is a product you will most likely rent, and lens rentals can start at $400 per day, depending upon your market.
	S4/i Lenses **www.cookeoptics.com**	Cooke Optics	$ Very expensive.	Again, a product that will most likely be rented. Cooke is a standard in the industry.	Note that Cooke is now offering a set of prime lenses for the Red One camera for about $20,000. Cooke and Zeiss offer zoom lenses, but cine-style shooters tend to opt for primes if at all possible.
	Red Camera Zoom Lenses **www.red.com**	Red Digital Cinema	$6,500-8,500.	18mm-50mm and 50-150mm zoom lenses for the Red One.	No discussion of lenses for cinema-stye shooting is complete without reference to the Red One. Red promises to revolutionize filmmaking and the zoom lenses offered for the camera are truly at breakthrough prices, considering the prices of comparable glass. Now if we only knew who makes them....

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COOL & LIGHT

THE LP-MICRO IS VERSATILE, COMPACT AND READY TO GO.

BY JAY HOLBEN

At first glance, the tiny LP-Micro (just 3.75"x 2.75"x1.5") looks more like a toy than a professional tool, but looks can be deceiving. Once you get past the rather chintzy feel of the plastic construction, this is a very flexible little tool. The construction is my biggest complaint. The body of the light itself is robust enough — although I don't believe it'll survive a good fall on a hard surface — but the hot-shoe connection and tilt articulation are a little too cheap to be effective.

The flip-down filter holder is a clever idea but poorly designed. The thin plastic diffusion and 85 correction filters slip into the holder and are held in place by tabs at the bottoms and sides. But the plastic of the flip-down frame will not withstand the rigors of production for long. The filters themselves are easily dislodged and popped out.

However, the function of the LP-Micro, as one would expect from Litepanels, is exceptional. The fixture has six rows of eight bright "white" (5600°K) LEDs. The face of the fixture is about 3.25"x2.5" and provides a pleasing, soft fill light. The diffusion filter looks to be somewhat similar to Lee 250 and cuts down the light by about one stop. The LED array itself is pretty soft, so the diffusion only serves to take a little off the crispness by better blending the transitions between the LEDs.

The power switch is a knob on the top of the fixture that has a built-in dimmer. With fresh batteries, you have an incredible dimming range of nearly 100 percent. Even at such a low intensity as to be unreadable by my meter, there was no flicker. As with all LED fixtures, this dimming has very little effect on the color temperature, so you can easily dial in your output as needed.

The LP-Micro runs off four standard AA 1.5-volt batteries. In my tests, the fixture ran for over 75 minutes at nearly 100 percent on four fresh AAs. After that, the light output began to drop. With four fresh batteries (all reading at 1.6 volts), at a distance of about 18", I measured an intensity of 73 footcandles. Within five minutes that dropped to 68 footcandles, but it held there for more than 30 minutes of constant burn. At a little over 45 minutes of constant burn, the intensity dropped off quickly. By 90 minutes of constant operation, the fixture was down to only 9.8 footcandles. The fixture was still quite cool to the touch with no areas of it uncomfortable to bare hands.

The Micro puts out a significant amount of light at close range. At an ISO of 320 (typical of many DV cameras) at 24 frames per second and a 1/48 shutter, it can give you an F2.8 at a distance of two feet.

In addition to the hot-shoe connector, Litepanels offers an available base plate for use off the camera.

This LP-Micro is designed for use with small camcorders, but it's functional enough to work in the professional realm as well. It may not withstand the tortures of production for very long, but, while it lasts, it's a great little fixture, especially for the price. DV

With fresh batteries, I measured the following photometrics (in footcandles) with a Sekonic L508 meter under real-world (not laboratory) conditions:

	CLEAN 5600°K (NO FILTERS)	WITH 85 (FULL CTO) AND DIFFUSION
1'	170 fc	30 fc
2'	48 fc	8 fc
3'	17 fc	4 fc
4'	9.8 fc	2.5 fc
5'	6.9 fc	1.7 fc
6'	4.6 fc	1.1 fc
7'	3.5 fc	0.87 fc
8'	2.6 fc	0.66 fc
9'	2.0 fc	0.57 fc
10'	1.9 fc	0.46 fc

SCORE

LITEPANELS LP MICRO ♥♥♥♥

PROS: Versatile, bright, small, lightweight, great dimming, runs on standard AA batteries. **CONS:** Plastic construction. **BOTTOM LINE:** A great little fixture. **MSRP:** $349 **CONTACT:** www.litepanels.com

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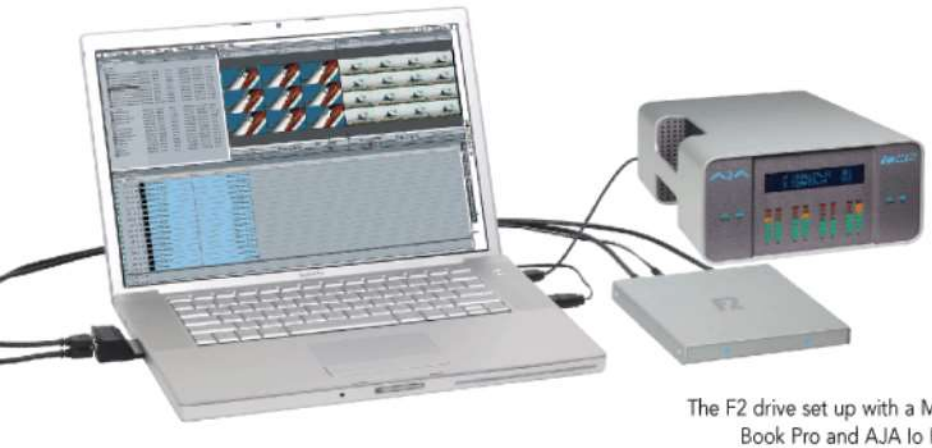


The F2 drive set up with a Mac Book Pro and AJA Io HD

SIZE MATTERS

SONNET'S F2 PORTABLE RAID IS A MINI SOLUTION TO A MAJOR PROBLEM.

BY NED SOLTZ

The blurred line between a desktop and a portable editing system just got a little more blurry.

Sonnet Technologies has released the Fusion F2 640GB portable hard drive, a storage solution aimed specifically at MacBook Pro editors who are working with large amounts of data where medium-rate throughputs are required.

In a package about 6" square and less than ¾" high, the F2 delivers two eSATA drives that interface to the MacBook Pro via an Express34 eSATA card. But what is most ingenious about this device is that it draws its power from the MacBook Pro's FireWire 400 port.

The drive enclosure contains two 320GB 2.5" drives from Western Digital. One might object that the WD drives are 5400 rather than the faster 7200 rpm drives. It is important to note, however, that speed is only one factor. The density of the WD drive actually makes these drives faster than a Hitachi 7200 rpm drive. I tested a pair of Hitachi drives striped in RAID 0 and found that the striped WD drives were 10MB/s faster!

AWARD OF DV EXCELLENCE

For those who might not be aware, the difference between four-pin and six-pin FireWire connectors is that those two extra pins carry power. Thus, with a supplied FireWire 400 cable, Sonnet has solved the problem of eSATA connections not carrying power and the need for a cumbersome external power supply.

But, you might ask, what if you need to use the remaining FireWire ports? First of all, if you need to connect a FW400 device, it is as simple as using an FW400-800 adapter. But what's most significant here is that all the F2 is drawing is power from that FireWire port. That is vital for the product that this drive compliments: The Io HD.

The Io HD from AJA Video Systems allows field capture of HD material with a real-time transcode to Apple ProRes 422 or ProRes 422 HQ via the computer's FireWire 800 port. The Io HD consumes the entire bandwidth of the FW bus and thus no other devices can be connected to the Mac simultaneously. Fusion F2 is only drawing power and not transferring data. Thus, Io HD and Fusion F2 work perfectly together.

Sonnet sells a separate eSATA controller (under $100) that connects to the two ports on the F2 unit. Note that this unit is not port-multiplied. Port multiplication does reduce throughput by up to 10 percent, as well as adds bulk owing to the additional controller board. Sonnet has opted for speed and a compact footprint over single-port solution.

Supplied accessories include two eSATA cables, a padded slipcase and a FireWire 400-to-miniplug power cable.

The drives are formatted in MacOS Extended format, and the user must then utilize Apple Disk Utility to set up a RAID, if desired. If working in DV or DVCPRO HD where a single drive is more than adequate, you might opt to set up a mirrored RAID 1 for redundant backup. If you desire more layers of real time or wish to work in Apple ProRes 422 HQ, I would strongly recommend setting up a RAID 0 and then backing up critical data according to your usual backup strategy. (You *do* have a backup strategy, I hope).

I opted to test the unit in a RAID 0 configuration.

I first applied the AJA System Test using a DVCPRO HD sample. Read-write speeds were 114.7 MB/s while read speeds were 114.3 MB/s. This falls well within the tolerance required for ProRes 422 HQ but just short of the 125MB/s (or so) throughput that would comfortably allow editing of 8-bit uncompressed HD. In all fairness, there really is no two-drive RAID that could edit uncompressed footage.

I put this drive through its paces in Final Cut Pro 6 on a MacBook Pro Core 2 Duo 2.33GHz with 2GB of RAM.

Installation merely required installing the driver software for the Express34 controller card and launching Disk Utility and configuring the RAID level.

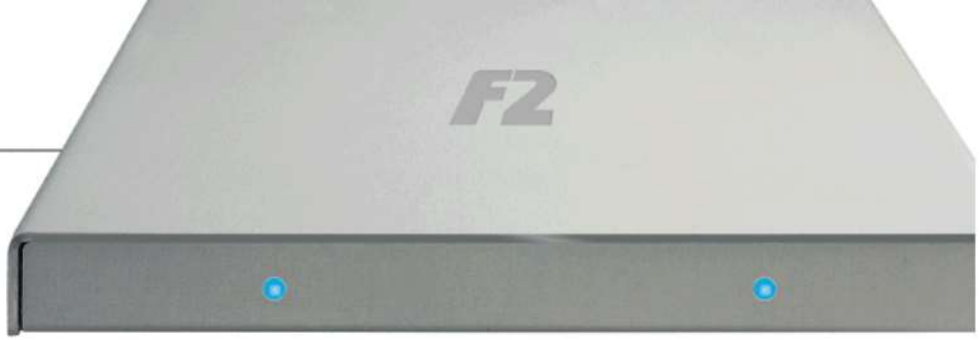
It indeed performs as advertised with the Io HD and does not interfere with the FireWire transfer that the Io HD performs.

In prior tests with single drive eSATA solutions, I could capture and edit ProRes

SCORE

SONNET FUSION F2 DRIVE ♥♥♥♥♡

PROS: Its design, speed and capacity make it a winner. **CONS:** FireWire-based power may be problematic for some. **BOTTOM LINE:** One of the most innovative portable storage products in a long time. **MSRP:** $895 **CONTACT:** www.sonnettech.com



422 without a hitch. ProRes 422 HQ, however, would drop frames and never play adequately on one drive. So my first test was to transcode material to ProRes 422 HQ using Compressor and then editing in FCP.

I was pleased to discover that not only would the F2 in a RAID 0 configuration record ProRes 422 HQ without dropping frames (as noted in the Io HD test above), it would play back any material transcoded to the faster HQ variant of the codec. Furthermore, I kept adding layer upon layer and got to six layers of ProRes HQ before the "orange bar" appeared in the FCP timeline in Unlimited RT mode. In Safe RT, I would get the "red" render bar after five layers. However, after rendering, I could play back without dropping a frame.

I did transfer some uncompressed 8-bit 1920x1080 60i footage to the drive. As expected, it dropped frames. The outcome was certain enough; still it needed to be tested.

I also tried to force DVCPRO HD 720p footage to a render state. It finally "went red" on me after 10 layers in FCP.

Sonnet is an experienced player in storage technologies, and they have not missed a trick with this remarkable little unit. The drives are mounted side by side not just to create a more portable unit for your computer bag but for an important design reason. Drives mounted on top of each other can create a "cross-coupled vibration" which could drop frames. Increasing the footprint also allows for fanless and thus quiet operation of the unit. The use of FireWire power is ingenious. Of course, keep in mind that the F2 could also work on a desktop Mac with a compatible eSATA card.

The Sonnet F2 has the potential of changing the way mobile Mac editors work. Sonnet's choice of the latest Western Digital mechanisms, the largest 2.5" drive currently on the market, is to be praised. Sonnet's unique design makes me scratch my head wondering why nobody else had thought of it yet.

The only potential negative that I could see would be for those who need the Express34 slot for Sony or Panasonic (with Dual Adapter) solid-state cards. The only workarounds I could propose would be either copying files to the internal drive, transferring to the F2 for editing, or copying to an external FireWire drive.

Still, the Sonnet F2 ranks as one of the most innovative storage products in years and is well worth the consideration of Mac editors who need a small, powerful storage solution at a reasonable price.

By the way, the Express34 card also has drivers for Windows 2000/XP/Vista, and the drives can then be formatted through Windows. DV

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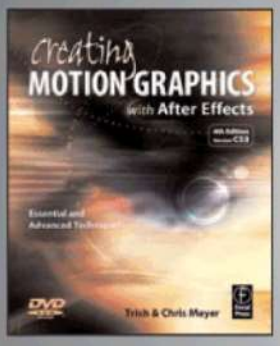

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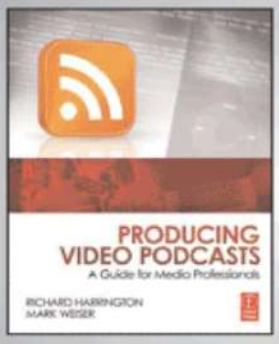

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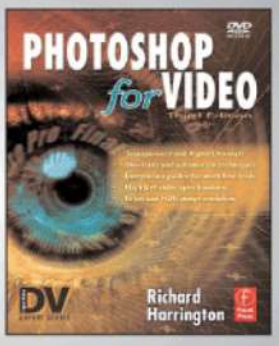

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IN THE BAG

PETROL'S PPFP-3N BAG IS YET ANOTHER WINNER.

BY JAY HOLBEN

I've been a fan of Petrol products for a long time. Indeed, I own a Petrol bag for my tripod, and it has served me well over many miles and many jobs. The quality, craftsmanship and consideration that go into each Petrol product is quite extraordinary.

This month, I had the opportunity to check out a new Petrol product: their PPFP-3N "Padded Front Pouch — Large" bag. Whereas most of Petrol's line of bags and protection gear is designed for a specific product, the PPFP-3N is more of a utility bag than anything else, although it's an odd size for my taste. It's too big to be one of those horrid "fanny packs" (thank goodness), but too small to be a backpack or a messenger bag.

It has a main pocket that is 8" deep by 8.5" long by 6.5" wide at full expansion, which seems a rather odd size to me. At the front, inside the main pocket, is a zippered pouch that is 5.25" deep by 6.25" wide. It is attached to the inside pocket only at the top, so it can be pulled out like a flap. It is more like a flap with a zippered pocket — but good for small things like change or pens and pencils. At the very back of the main pouch is a Velcro pocket the length and height of the main pocket. The front of the Velcro pocket is zippered, so there's another thin pocket there. In front of that is an open pocket that is 4" deep by 5.5" wide. Next to that are three pen/pencil slots. The outside front of the pouch has a zippered pocket about 5.25" deep by 6" wide with clear vinyl on the front so you can easily see the contents of this pocket. A large flap buckles closed over the main pocket, the front of which is padded and zippered for yet another pocket of about 5" deep by 7" wide. The side of the outside of the main pocket has a neoprene pocket intended for a cell phone. It looked a little long and narrow to me, but my cell phone (an LG VX8300) fit in perfectly. A carabineer-like clamp is attached to the front for hooking on accessories like, perhaps, your car keys.

A nylon strap in the back is intended for attaching around your waist (far too fanny-pack like!) or over your shoulder, but the padding on the strap really doesn't seem suited for over the shoulder or across the chest. At full extension of the strap, when I put it over my shoulder and across my chest messenger-bag style, the bag sat awkwardly at my kidney and leaned away from my body uncomfortably. When I tried it over just one shoulder, it didn't sit right at all and leaned away from my body at a completely bizarre angle. I concluded that this is only intended to be worn around the waist.

Perhaps the most clever aspect of the bag is the zipper in the top of the buckled flap over the main pocket. It opens directly into the main pocket to allow access while the front flap is securely buckled. That way, if this was around your waist, you could easily access the main pocket from the top without flipping up the main flap.

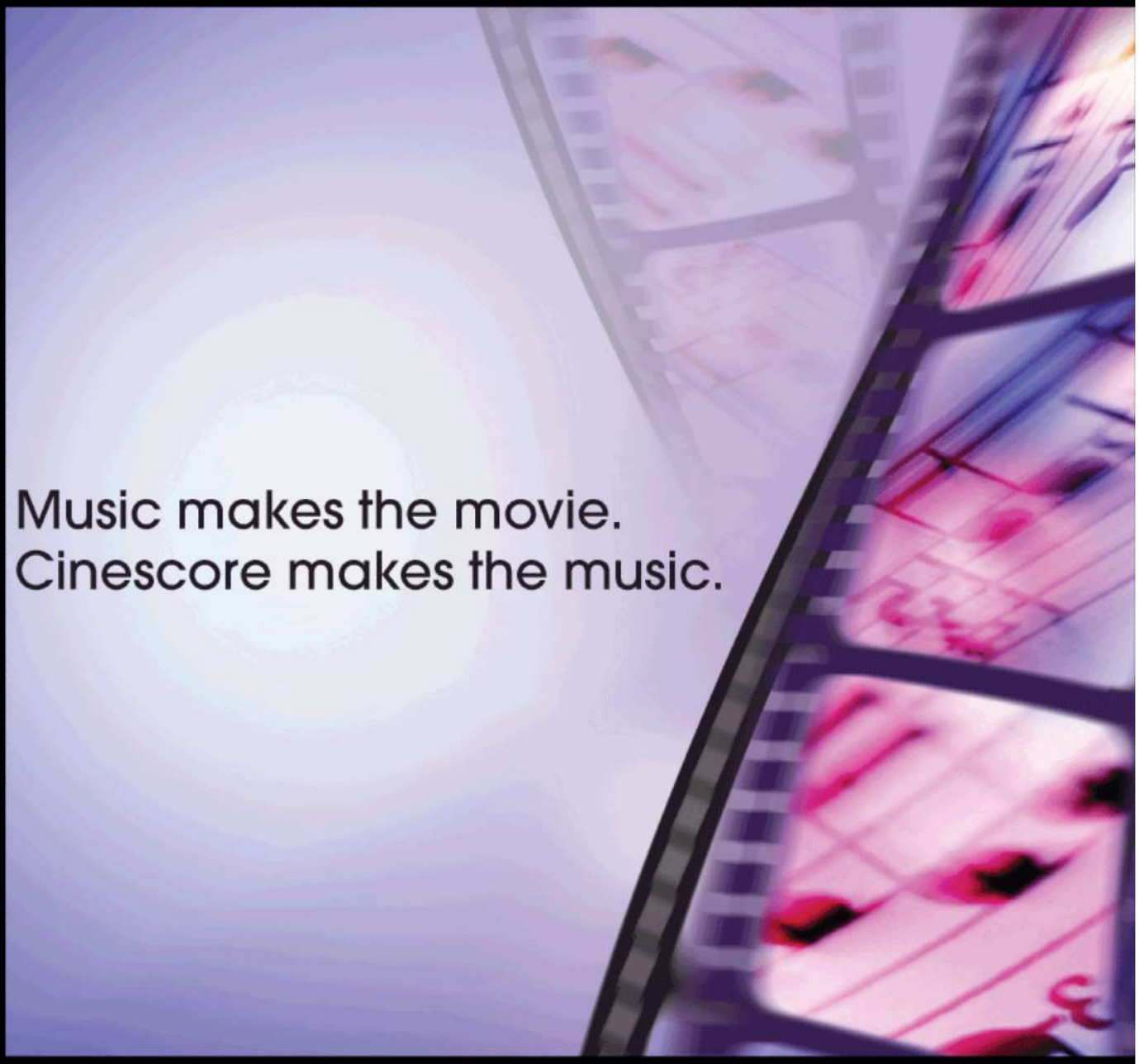
The construction and craftsmanship is extraordinary. There's no doubt that this bag will withstand a considerable amount of wear and tear and outright abuse. There are plenty of well-placed, well-secured and well-segmented pockets, but I can't help thinking these pockets were specifically designed for something, I just can't seem to imagine what it is. To me, it's a great bag in search of contents. DV

SCORE

PETROL PPFP-3N BAG ♥♥♥♥

PROS: Excellent construction, robust, versatile; lots of pockets, nooks and crannies. **CONS:** Only comfortable around waist, too small for paperwork or laptops, odd size. **BOTTOM LINE:** A great bag in search of a purpose. **MSRP:** $49.95
CONTACT: www.petrolbags.com

SONY



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EGO TRIP

LOWEL'S UTILITY LAMP IS THE CORE OF A SIMPLE TABLETOP SETUP.

BY CHUCK GLOMAN

Lowel's Ego is, basically, two medium-based, screw-in fluorescent bulbs behind a piece of white plastic. The result is a unique soft source. Ideal for tabletop shoots where soft lighting is needed, this option lists for $125 and will make itself right at home in your kit.

It takes a little time to assemble the Ego, because you need to fit the rear bounce card into the plastic slots. My "kit" included two 27-watt 5500°K fluorescent bulbs, which consume very little power (a 70-watt bulb is the largest that the Ego accepts). A rocker switch on the power cord activates the light.

Both lamps equal the output of a 200-watt incandescent lamp, but without the heat. Lowel claims these lamps last up to 10,000 hours but are not dimmable. The lamps themselves do get hot if on for an extended period of time, but little or no heat is felt through the plastic bounce card.

The "tilt dial" on the back of the unit allows it to sit on a table to add lighting, while the screw adapter on the bottom lets you mount the Ego onto a tripod. A folded white bounce card is also supplied to provide the needed fill if the Ego is used as a key source.

Though ideal for still photography, the Ego is just as comfortable in the world of video. I used it as a portrait light when shooting an interview. The unit can be placed within inches of the talent's face without casting too much illumination (or burning the skin).

The Ego is a great low-key or fill light; in fact, Lowel recommends using the Ego as a key source for a webcam. I found it to be an excellent fill source in shooting situations, and it's now a permanent part of my tabletop shooting arsenal. My students use it on shoots because it's lightweight but packs a powerful — yet soft — lighting punch. DV

The Ego from Lowel is an excellent light source for shooting small items or interviews.

SCORE

LOWEL EGO ♥♥♥♥

PROS: Small, soft and powerful. **CONS:** Limited wattage. **BOTTOM LINE:** The Lowel Ego offers a soft, low-cost light that works equally well for still photography and videography. **MSRP:** $125 (Complete unit with lamps and bounce reflector) **CONTACT:** www.lowel.com

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CONDENSED CONVENIENCE

TWO AUDIO ACCESSORIES THAT DEMAND LITTLE BUT DELIVER BIG.

BY CHUCK GLOMAN

K-Tek (a part of M.Klemme Technology Corp.) now offers two amazing accessories to improve your on-the-road audio and take up less space during transport.

The first, the Avalon Traveler KE-79CC, is a six-section, mini boom pole that extends to a length of 79". This lightweight, inexpensive pole (list price $250) collapses to 20" and weighs a little more than a pound, so it should easily slide into your tripod bag or case for travel.

The KE-79CC features an XLR cable inside the aluminum pole, with the female end extending from the top and the male end at the bottom. The real test to see if the internal cable would get kinked was to allow my students to use it on several shoots.

After more than a dozen separate incidents, not one of them was able to mangle the internal wiring. (This equates to about the same type of punishment I would give it over 12 years of use.) K-Tek calls each connection a "captive collett that has maximum holding power with minimum torque." I just call it functional.

The black finish will receive its share of kicks and scratches, but each section locks tightly. I don't know if I will ever use my grown-up boom pole again — with location work, I'm rarely further than 6' from my subject. The KE-79CC now has a permanent place in my tripod case.

K-Tek also offers a 6" softy for medium to smaller microphones (like my Sennheiser 416). Named the Fuzzy, this fabric-coated exterior covers a form-fitting, wind-resistant foam inner core.

K-Tek's Avalon Traveler KE-79CC offers more than 6' of reach in a boom pole that collapses to about 20", while the Fuzzy comes in six sizes to fit your shotgun mike.

With wind gusts at 30mph, my Sennheiser was well protected, and I didn't hear any of the wind noise. Acoustically transparent, this covering is also water repellent.

If the medium-sized Fuzzy isn't the right fit, for the same list price of $110, you have a choice of six sizes. Over the phone, the people at M.Klemme Technology helped me get the right fit for my shotgun. Now, I never leave without having my shotgun microphone covered with a Fuzzy. DV

SCORE

AVALON TRAVELER KE-79CC & FUZZY ♥♥♥♥

PROS: KE-79CC's XLR cable is mangle-proof, compact size; Fuzzy is acoustically transparent, various sizes. **CONS:** Limited reach; not cheap. **BOTTOM LINE:** Solid additions to your kit. **MSRP:** $250; $110 **CONTACT:** www.ktekboompoles.com

A TRUE TV STAR

HOW GEORGE SPIRO DIBIE, ASC HELPED TRANSFORM VIDEO FROM A "MEDIUM" INTO AN ART FORM.

BY JON SILBERG

BELOW: PHOTO BY OWEN ROIZMAN, ASC; RIGHT: COURTESY OF THE ASC

Above, George Spiro Dibie, ASC (on right) and producer Danny Arnold on the set of their hit ABC series *Barney Miller*. Left, Dibie today.

The American Society of Cinematographers chose to honor George Spiro Dibie, ASC with the organization's Career Achievement in Television Award this year — presented on January 26 — for his significant contributions to television. Dibie's pioneering camerawork, especially in such multi-camera sitcoms as *Barney Miller, Growing Pains* and *Night Court,* helped influence the look and approach used on countless other shows since.

Dibie launched his professional career in the early 1960s while working at the lowest levels of the electrical department on 20th Century Fox's epic *Cleopatra*. He quickly worked his way up from best boy to gaffer, lighting for such veteran directors of photography as James Wong Howe, ASC and Harry Stradling, Sr., ASC. In the 1960s, studios were cranking out far more feature films than they do today and the economics of filmmaking were very different. Dibie notes that he often had more time to learn and experiment with his lighting than people starting out today can hope for, and that experience proved invaluable throughout his career lighting television stages.

By the early 1970s, Dibie was looking to become a cinematographer himself, but at that time the union was very much a closed shop — almost impossible to get into without powerful friends or family already on the inside. Undeterred, Dibie and educator Roger Dash made a series of educational films though Dibie-Dash Productions. Dibie was essentially a one-man production crew on these films, directing and lighting. The company would eventually sell thousands of 16mm prints of their various films all over the country. It also was a proving ground for Dibie to work as a cinematographer, and he did eventually get work shooting film and video for the *ABC Armchair Mysteries* and lighting some massive stages for the children's video show *The New Zoo Revue*.

When producer Danny Arnold hired Dibie to be the cinematographer on his new four-camera videotaped comedy series *Barney Miller,* there was really no precedent for the look Arnold was after. The shows shot on the two-inch "quad" tape of the 1970s were generally lit from everywhere — nothing was in shadow, no illumination was motivated. None of the new techniques Dibie was learning and creating in features were present in the videotaped sitcoms of the early 1970s.

Many producers, Dibie explains, "would say, 'A bright look is funny.' And their shows had no subtlety; everything was bright."

But Dibie and Arnold saw the wry humor of *Barney Miller,* set in a dingy police precinct, differently. Dibie came in and completely changed the set's lighting configuration — which had been previously used for game shows — and planned out the lighting grid carefully to provide key and fill lighting for all the actors, but also to motivate light with windows or practicals and allow some portions of the frame to go a bit dark. He also brought down the overall illumination from about 400 footcandles to about 30, which required that he open up the iris to around T2.8, rather than the standard T5.6. "Some video controllers wouldn't work with me," Dibie remembers. "They said the pictures were dirty because you could see some noise." But he and Arnold liked the "noise" and didn't want their series to have the crispness of a game show.

Their tenacity and daring result set the stage for how TV looks today; not simply washed-out and flat, but expressive and in sync with the characters portrayed and stories being told.

Dibie shot *Barney Miller* for seven years and remained one of the top cinematographers in multi-camera television for decades — using contrast and color to vary the looks of his shows to reflect the stories, rather than setting a single look for a space. In doing this, he helped redefine what could be done with the multi-camera format, ultimately redefining video itself. DV

FOOD FIGHT!

THE BATTLE IN FRONT OF AND BEHIND THE LENS ON THE SET OF THE HIT **IRON CHEF AMERICA.**

BY MATTHEW JEPPSEN

Based on the Japanese series *Iron Chef* (1993-1999), which became a cult hit in the U.S. after being rerun on the Food Network channel, *Iron Chef America* is a flurry of cooking creativity that pits seasoned "Iron Chefs" against talented challengers in a cooking battle of speed, resourcefulness and skill. A secret ingredient is revealed, and one hour later each chef must deliver a number of finished courses to be judged by a panel of food critics and celebrity judges.

Iron Chef Bobby Flay vs. Marcus Samuelsson

There are really two battles happening here: One between the chefs in Kitchen Stadium, and one on the other side of the lens as the show's production team captures the frenetic whirlwind of action. *DV* went behind the scenes at Food Network's New York City studios to experience the battle firsthand.

9:00 AM: Arrival at Food Network's facility at Chelsea Market, located in the Meatpacking District of New York. I'm ushered through corporate offices and past a series of test kitchens to the *Iron Chef America* battleground: Kitchen Stadium. It's bustling with activity and appears much larger on TV than it is in reality. I count eight Thomson multi-format Worldcams on the set, and can reach out and touch one of the two Stanton Jimmy-Jibs. Overhead are two robotic cameras from ACE Robotics. Though all the Grass Valley LDK 6000 cameras are HD-capable, I'm told that the show is taped in SD. Executive producer Bruce Seidel says this choice is due in part to how the widescreen format affects close-up image framing.

9:20 AM: Today's challenger is Marcus Samuelsson, owner of New York's Aquavit restaurant. He has been fitted with a wireless lapel mike and is ready to begin taping. With the exception of the judges, all the talent are rigged with Sennheiser SK-50 beltpack transmitters and MKE-2 capsules. The judges are hard wired to the 64-channel Solid State Logic C-100 digital audio console. The crew quickly tapes Samuelsson's selection of today's Iron Chef opponent: Bobby Flay.

9:30 AM: Moving quickly, the crew resets for a few takes of co-host Kevin Brausch introducing today's judging panel. Meanwhile, Flay and Samuelsson convene with their kitchen staffs and the production crew shoots B-roll of steaming pots. Chef Flay seems ready for the action to start. Fans of the show already know that competing chefs have no prior knowledge of the battle's secret ingredient. However, I'm informed that they are allowed to build a pantry of complimentary ingredients in advance, working only from a short list of secret ingredient hints. Chef Flay makes his way over to me and shakes my hand. It's clear from our short conversation that he is highly competitive.

9:38 AM: Show host (and chef in his own right) Alton Brown rehearses his lines to himself. Focused and prepared, he nails the show intro, a push-in jib shot, on the first take. The director requests a quick safety take, and then the crew moves on. I note that Alton has live Internet access via his Apple laptop. He can also monitor all the camera feeds live on dual 30" Apple Cinema Displays, as well as the director's live switch.

Flay and his team dig into their secret ingrediant while being covered from multiple angles.

PHOTO BY MATTHEW JEPPSEN; ABOVE, COURTESY OF FOOD NETWORK

FOOD FIGHT!

PHOTO BY MATTHEW JEPPSEN

9:45 AM: Today's secret ingredient is revealed by "The Chairman" (actor Mark Dacascos, best know for his work in martial-arts films) with a flourish. It is obvious he is fighting back a smile while announcing the food item with an exaggerated expression on his face. Laughter breaks out across the set. The sequence is captured from three angles, two cameras on tripods and one overhead jib. After The Chairman delivers his line, the crew busies themselves over the next few minutes shooting B-roll of the secret ingredient.

9:55 AM: It is time for the signature battle signal. Picking up his line from the ingredient reveal, Chairman Dacascos shouts the traditional cry *"Allez cuisine!"* (rough French for "go and cook") and steps back dramatically. This is covered by several handheld cameras and two jibs and is captured in just a few quick takes.

10:10 AM: The 60-minute battle is now set to begin. Both jibs have been rolled out to the edges of the set, one at the front of each competing kitchen station. They are operated by one crew member each and have joystick-controlled remote pan/tilt camera heads. Apple boxes are located at set intervals along the outside of each counter, giving handheld cameramen a better vantage point for peering into tall pots and over the shoulders of sous chefs. Two cameras on Vinten Quatro rolling pedestals roam the front of each kitchen station. Crewmembers are equipped with HME BP850 Receiver headsets so they can take direction from the floor crew and the backstage director. However, much of the time operators simply cover their predetermined zones and react to the action instinctively. Most of the camera operators and crew members have been with the show since the first season. That would account for the speed and efficiency of the crew; they are a well-oiled production machine after over 90 episodes. As the director shouts "Battle!" both chefs make a mad dash for ingredients. The pace of the edited show on television is frenetic to be sure. The entire set is instantly crawling with activity, cooks and food literally flying all over the kitchens as four handheld cameramen rush from station to station. Each camera is equipped with a small shotgun mike to pick up localized audio, and shotgun "sizzle" mikes are strategically placed throughout the set for stationary sound effects. Both jibs and robo cameras roam constantly over each kitchen. Meanwhile, in the background you can hear a constant stream of play-by-play chatter from Alton and Kevin.

10:30 AM: Alton delivers the judging panel introduction toss-over to a jib-mounted camera. The toss-over will be cut together in post with Kevin's previously taped introduction. Today's panel consists of food critic and author Jeffrey Steingarten, broadway actress Cady Huffman and chef Art Smith.

10:37 AM: A product logo is discovered on one of the boxes in the challenger's kitchen. As Food Network has a strict "No Product Placement" policy, the offending box is removed and the product returned in a nondescript bag. And for the first time today I hear the phrase "fix it in post." During the course of the battle, notes on each course are taken, and everything is recorded into what basically amounts to a script created on the fly. In post back at Triage Entertainment's facilities in Los Angeles, editors will use this script as a guideline as they cut the ensuing 10 hours of time-code-synced battle footage down to under an hour. I note that throughout the course of the battle, a director back in the booth has been coordinating camera tape changes at specific intervals.

10:57 AM: Alton delivers a few one-take commercial break bumpers into a handheld camera. I know he's been studying his notes, but I can't help but wonder how much is simply off the cuff. He is a hosting machine.

11:00 AM: Challenger Samuelsson plates his second course as Alton solicits comments from the panel of judges. None of this commentary is scripted, and I realize why: The pace is so demanding; the time for retakes is virtually nil. In the last 50-odd minutes, the cameras haven't slowed down one bit. I stifle a laugh as one cameraman sprints to capture a shot, practically dragging his assistant, who is furiously unlooping cable like a windmill in a hurricane. Chef Flay calls for the time — we are at 10 minutes and counting down fast.

11:10 AM: The battle has been called, and the crew moves in quickly to capture Kevin interviewing each chef. I am reminded that the show is not live at this point when the director stops Bobby in mid-sentence to reframe the shot. But reactions and commentary remain unscripted.

11:21 AM: Alton quickly burns through a few pickup shots and commercial bumpers. He looks surprised when the crew calls for a re-take on one of the bumpers, but the director quickly assures him it was a camera misstep.

11:36 AM: The judging process begins. Each chef has 45 min-

(continued on page 49)

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KEY THOUGHTS ON CHROMA KEY

GREENSCREEN: SALVATION FOR THE CREATIVE VIDEOMAKER.

BY SCOTT BILLUPS

The following is an excerpt from the recently released book "Digital Moviemaking 3.0" (Michael Wiese Productions, 2008). While it is specific to working with chroma key, the book itself offers a wealth of digital production and post advice.

Chroma key is your friend because it releases you from the shackles of reality. There is no other technique that can so drastically increase the scope of your show or so favorably impact the bottom line. Even projects that would not be considered as visual-effects productions can benefit greatly from a number of different uses. One of the most common uses is with regard to pickups. By now it should be *de rigeur* for every production crew to shoot a clean plate or two of a set or location before they wrap out.

When it comes time to shoot that obligatory pickup or missed line, a little pop-up greenscreen can save thousands of dollars. Although the topic of chroma key is encumbered with mismatched bits of outdated information, the practical job of shooting good elements are really quite simple:

- Cloth is better than paper, and paint is better than cloth.
- Blue for film, green for digital.
- Blonds on blue, everyone else on green.
- Don't use a bigger screen than you need.
- Costume color conflicts must be taken seriously.
- Pop-up screens can handle most of your needs.
- A little "straw" gel in the backlight works wonders.
- Never let a tracking mark cross the face or hair.
- Turn the camera's detail circuit off.
- Shoot a progressive image whenever possible.
- Get the actor as far away from the screen as possible.
- Match the actor's lighting to the back-plate.

Lighting chroma key was once a difficult task, but the newer "digital" colors and the greatly evolved 3-space chroma key software open this powerful process up to anyone with a laptop. Digital green requires far less light than older chroma key green, and it lights more evenly. In many cases, available light is all you'll need to pull a great key.

As one of my favorite gaffers puts it, *"a thermonuclear fusion source with a water vapor diffusion system is the perfect system for lighting chroma key"* (Cloudy day).

Scott Billups in action behind the camera.

3-D keyers are far more forgiving than the older 2-D systems. You still need to get the screen rather flat, but the increased dynamic range of newer keyers is far more forgiving.

For studio work, you'd be hard pressed to beat Space Lights for their soft volume and even spread or a couple Kino Flo banks for a more focused spread. Chroma key software is a long topic; lots of egos, with lots of opinions. Cheapest and easiest chroma key system is Apple's iMovie and a copy of GeeThree's Slick Effects. At $50, you'll need to spend a whole lot more to get to the next usable keyer.

Top-of-the-line keyers in daily use at the Billups household include Red Giant's Primatte, the Foundry's Keylight and zMatte by Digital Film Tools. Between my wife and I, we pull well over 3,000 mattes a year for movies, commercials and HD TV shows.

My wife is an Inferno operator and loves the Autodesk keyers. Whenever I run into a shot that I just can't get to pull correctly, I give it to her. Part of it is that she's just more talented than I am, and part of it is that the Inferno/Combustion keyer is great.

Tim Sassoon is a Cinemagician. His Santa Monica-based visual effects company blends science and craft to create high-end visual effects for everything from commercials to IMAX. His take: *"The only thing about keying is color correcting the image to*

Billups shoots an element for a future chroma-key composite.

make the best possible key without worrying about what it looks like, then using the result as a matte.

"For HDV in post, I'd mention a couple of things. First, if you're going to need a lot of post color correction, I'd recommend shooting with gain up a bit, like +3dB, even if it's bright sunlight, just to noise the image up a bit. That will help keep shadow blocking at bay and increase the apparent bit depth of the image.

"Another thing is, there's a good chance you'll need to dub the masters to HDCAM prior to capture, if one's doing offline, then online conform. Another approach is to capture uncompressed from the get-go, using an HD-SDI or HDMI output, and treat it as if it were coming off an HDCAM tape. The advantage of that is using the same hardware codec to decode it as was used to encode, rather than QuickTime's software codec, which can give you a slightly better image."

Another good friend, VFX supervisor Mike Most, adds: *"A compositor always tries every possibility before settling on what is usually a combination of techniques to create a quality matte. In almost every case, a 'single solution' matte is not a professional quality matte. Proper mattes almost always require multiple keys of various types and often a degree of rotoscoping before they're as good as they can get.*

"Of course, that's the approach of professional compositors — people who do this for a living. Not editors, cameramen, or producers trying to save money by not using professional compositors."

A growing number of the movies and shows that I shoot involve varying degrees of greenscreen. Over the years I've developed a system that allows me to capture the highest quality signal while providing a convenient production and reference station.

The performance window in production technology is moving so fast that if we wait for computers to become ruggedized enough for location work, the state-of-the-art will have moved on. It is for this reason that it becomes imperative to devise gear specifically engineered to incorporate current technologies into the production environment.

The current version of my "AppleCart" is based on the Steadicam LowBoy Dolly from BackStage Equipment Company in North Hollywood, California. It was custom fabricated for me by the company's owner. It has spent the majority of its life in trucks and planes, traveling between locations and folds into itself for shuttling around on local jobs. It also breaks all the way down to the two side rails and tires for shipping.

Nearly everything else is speed rail and fittings, which can be pulled from the grip truck on location. Any grip worth his Starbucks can slap this thing together, modify it or dismantle it in just a few minutes. I've developed a couple of these production carts in various configurations, but the majority of them are Mac Pros with Blackmagic cards and Ciprico RAIDs. They all do 4:4:4 dual-stream HD-SDI and stand up to the wear and tear of real-world production.

One of the great things about having a computer right there next to the camera is that you can use the onscreen diagnostics from your capture application to make sure that you're getting a good bite on the chroma key.

Finish the shoot; load on a copy of After Effects and just hand the whole box off to the artist. Once they finish pulling the key and cutting the garbage mattes, they hand it over to the compositor and they in turn hand it off to the editor. DV

"Digital Moviemaking 3.0" (ISBN 1932907378) is available at www.mwp.com and www.amazon.com. Used with permission.

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BY JAY HOLBEN

COLOR CONUNDRUM

CLEAR COMMUNICATION WITH A COLORIST IS AN ESSENTIAL ART.

PHOTOS BY JAY HOLBEN

In today's digital age, the concept of Do-It-Yourself has been taken to a new level; especially if you listen to the product manufacturers. However, just because one technically *can* do everything doesn't mean one *should* do everything.

There are still aspects of creative production best left to highly specialized individuals, and one of those remains firmly in the hands of the colorist.

As a former film cinematographer, the concept of a colorist or color timer is something that I've grown up with. When shooting film, color timing is an impossible step to skip; someone has to set the exposure values for red, green and blue light passing through the negative to make a positive print. As it happens, a considerable amount of creative control comes with that task. Adjusting red by a few points can drastically alter the final look of that film print — and from that creative control was born a symbiotic relationship between cinematographer and color timer.

When telecine came onto the scene and the machines were able to transfer film negative onto videotape as a positive image, the same principles applied, but, suddenly, there was even more flexibility over the image. It wasn't just red, green and blue densities, but yellow, cyan and magenta, in addition to gamma, toe and shoulder control. It wasn't long before a telecine colorist had the ability, quite literally, to turn a day into a night. With this amount of control, a very clear and concise communication was required between the cinematographer and colorist to make sure that no misinterpretation of intentions happened. For instance, the cinematographer may have intended a scene to be underexposed and mysterious but the colorist interprets that as a mistake and makes the image bright and clear. For years cinematographers and colorists worked to refine their own methods of communication, but nothing goes beyond the cinematographer sitting in the same room while the colorist is working, offering specific guidance on his or her intentions when the image was originated.

At its most basic, color timing, also known as color correction, is a technical process to iron out the kinks and inconsistencies in original photography. Inconsistencies arise from differences in exposures, lighting, color, film stocks, white balance, etc. In a particular scene, the sun might have passed behind a cloud during one take, rendering the shot slightly cooler in color than the other shots around it, or a particular shot in a scene may have been shot months away from the next shot in the scene and the lighting wasn't exactly the same. These inconsistencies can arise from something as simple as the exact same model of lighting fixture has a slightly different color temperature than a previous fixture had months before. While shooting, no one would be able to see the difference, but when the shots are edited together side-by-side, the difference becomes glaring, so the color-correction process smoothes out these inconsistencies and makes the picture a cohesive whole.

Over the years, this process has evolved into an extraordinary creative tool. Digital color correction has gone far beyond a simple smoothing of inconsistencies to a further extension of creative image enhancement. An experienced and talented colorist

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can elevate your images to a whole new level.

Although many editing platforms now include powerful color-correction applications, the software and its capabilities are not a replacement for an artist controlling it. During the course of my career, I've had the luxury of sitting with some of the top colorists in the business, and I can say, in no uncertain terms, that the talent of the colorist is a considerable attribute to the success of the color session. Merely having the tools, and even a qualified understanding of how to use them, does not replace the talents of a good colorist by any stretch of the imagination.

That said, the first session with a real colorist can be a bit intimidating for the novice filmmaker. Understanding the basics of what is possible and what the colorist is doing to manipulate the image will help alleviate some of the trepidations you might have when going in for your first session.

At its most basic level, there are three major image controls that need to be understood: the blacks, the gamma (or midrange) and the whites. Blacks and whites, or shadows and highlights, are relatively self-explanatory. Brightening the blacks is often called "raising" or "lifting" and it will make the shadow areas less dense, less dark and render the blacks more gray-like, lightening the picture. The reverse of this, "crushing" or "lowering" the blacks, takes the low-end shadow detail and eliminates it, strengthening the blacks and darkening the picture.

The "whites" control the highlights of the image. It is important to note that, in the digital world, once you have overexposed an element — in the photography — beyond 100 percent white, there is no longer any detail information remaining and it can no longer be brought down. Whereas underexposed elements of the image can be raised toward "proper" exposure and still have detail.

The trickier, but possibly the most important, area is your gamma or midtone range. This is where most of your skin tones, with the exception of dark black skin, falls. Just like the blacks and whites, you can lift and/or lower the midtone range to control the image look overall. If your faces are a little too overexposed, you may want to bring down the gamma a bit to correct that; or if they're a little dark, bringing up the gamma can help considerably.

All of these areas have independent control, but they also all work together. A combination of crushing the blacks, popping (raising) the whites and raising the gamma can result in a "poppy," contrasty, commercial look.

Communicating your needs to the colorist is as simple as asking: "Can we raise the gamma here a bit?" or "Can we crush the blacks a bit?" You'll see the results immediately.

Once you get beyond these basics, you have primary color correction, which is manipulation over red, green and blue elements of the picture. In additive color mixing (light), these are your primary colors and any combination thereof can create any color from pure black to pure white. You don't always have to know what a little green will do to the picture, you can simply talk in conceptual terms with your colorist. For example, you might say "I'd like this scene to be really warm, but more yellow warm than orange" or "I want this scene to be very cold, but more steely than deep blue" and let your colorist work their magic.

It's a good idea to start with a defining shot for a particular sequence. You may have started shooting a scene with inserts or cut-aways or coverage on a secondary actor, but the most important shot for the scene is the close-up of the actress that happened to be the 10th shot for the day. It's a good idea to start with that 10th shot, establish the look that you want for the sequence on that hero shot and then have the colorist go back and match the rest of the sequence to that key shot. This not only saves time — as the colorist can match the look quicker if they know where they're going with it — but it also sets the right tone for the most important moments of a scene. Sometimes if you start setting the look on less important shots, when you get to the important ones — the look you liked earlier just doesn't work and you have to go back to the beginning, costing time and money.

The frame store is one of your best friends. Most color suites have a frame store option where you can capture a single frame from a colored sequence and recall that frame later for reference. This is used to match shots and sequences that don't sit right next to each other on your camera rolls.

It's best to establish your own working cadence with the colorist, but it's a good idea to let them work on a shot first, let them get to a point where they've done their technical adjustments and then start giving input. There's nothing more frustrating than having a filmmaker over your shoulder saying "No, no, that's too bright, that's not what I want" when the colorist is actually setting a range for the whites and has no intention of keeping it there; you're just speaking too soon. If you're not comfortable with your cadence yet simply tell the colorist your general idea for the scene then tell them "Go ahead and work and let me know when you're ready for comments." They will appreciate that more than I can explain in the space allowed here.

Many digital shooters don't feel color correction is a necessary step, but that's a mistake. Color correction, at its most basic technical application, can elevate the consistency and professionalism of your image to a whole new level. Working with a talented colorist and allowing their creative input can improve the final look of your images well beyond your imagination. DV

DYNAMIC DUOS

From left, AKG's C1000S mike, Audio-Technica's AE3300 mike and Sennheiser's K6 powering module.

BY MICHAEL SILBERGLEID

Audio can be the most important facet of any production. When the audio is great, it doesn't call attention to itself. But when the audio is poor, it's like a slap in the face to the viewer.

To ensure good audio, you need to monitor your audio during production. How exactly are you doing that? During production, most videographers will either use a camcorder's built-in side speaker (if available) to "confidence monitor" the audio, or they'll use headphones.

CONFIDENCE ISN'T QUALITY

Confidence monitoring has less to do with quality and more to do with quantity. In other words, did you get something? Did the mike pick up the sound you wanted?

There are three main problems with relying on confidence monitoring: the speaker isn't of the highest quality; your right ear (which would be used for an on-camera speaker) is also exposed to any other sounds at the shooting location; and your left ear is fully exposed to the other sounds at the shooting location.

To remedy this, headphones can be used, though the quality of headphones can vary greatly. Bad headphones can totally misrepresent the audio so it sounds like you have more bass, midrange or high end than you really have.

Headphones come in three primary types: in-ear (buds), on-ear, and over-the-ear. Dedicated audio professionals tend to use over-the-ear headphones because the design passively blocks out some of the ambient noise at the shooting location (tight-fitting, in-ear headphones can also block some of ambient noise). However, if you are a one-person crew, over-the-ear headphones can get in the way during a shoot when your head is against the side of the camera.

You can also consider headphones with noise-reducing or sound-isolation technology. In the past few years, these types of headphones have become readily available from a variety of manufacturers, including Audio-Technica, Shure and Sony.

Sound-isolating headphones use passive sleeves to block ambient noise, while noise-reducing headphones use active built-in microphones to detect ambient noise and invert the sound wave so that both sounds cancel each other out before they hit your ear. Noise canceling is not a perfect technology, but it does work and is available in in-ear style for videographers, plus on-ear and over-the-ear styles for others. Obviously, in ear and over the ear will give the best results.

Noise-canceling headphones take some getting used to. The trick is knowing what you are hearing. For example, if you're on a shoot in an office, there's going to be some ambient noise. The headphones will do a good job of canceling what your ear would normally pick up, so you're left with what the mike captures.

Let's say that someone is talking on the phone behind you. With an on-camera speaker or passive headphones, you could hear the person. The question is: Did the microphone pick up this person's conversation?

With noise-canceling headphones, the ambient sound is canceled — but if you still hear the person on the phone, it might be the microphone picking them up. That sound is *not* canceled by the headphones. You might also hear sounds that your exposed ear could not pick up. That's a great benefit.

SOUND CONVERSION

That brings us to the microphones you're using. If your productions are based around consumer DV camcorders, they often leave no room for audio improvement because they don't have a microphone jack. If you're going to rely on inexpensive consumer camcorders, try to find one that allows for an external microphone.

Some midrange professional camcorders come with a microphone. Sometimes they're good, and sometimes they're not.

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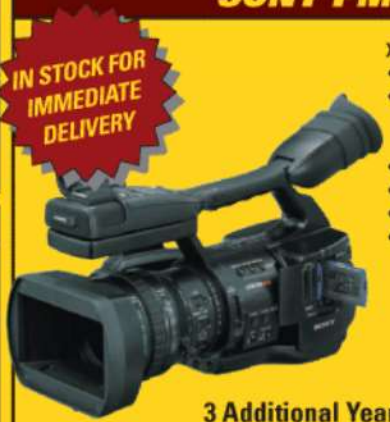

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Think of those mikes as your backup — good to have, but not your first choice.

Microphones are distinguished by how they convert sound waves into electrical energy and their pickup patterns. Although there are a number of ways to convert sounds into electrical impulses, the majority of video productions tend to use only three types of microphones: dynamic, capacitor and electret. All three types of microphones use a moving diaphragm to capture sound, but use different electrical principles for converting the mechanical energy of the diaphragm into an electrical signal.

Most handheld microphones are dynamic. They're popular because they're relatively inexpensive, rugged and don't need a power supply or batteries. The downside to dynamic mikes is in how they convert sound to electricity.

By using a diaphragm attached to a small coil of wire suspended in a permanent magnetic field, a dynamic mike works like a mini electric generator. The problem is that sound waves need to move both the diaphragm and the coil, which can take away from high-frequency performance and the reproduction of quiet sounds.

The capacitor microphone is built around a pair of conducting plates, one fixed and the other acting as a moving diaphragm. As the diaphragm vibrates and the spacing between the plates changes, the capacitance changes. When a fixed electrical charge is applied to the capacitor, an electrical signal is produced that mimics the diaphragm vibration.

Because the diaphragm is lightweight, it's better at picking up high frequency sounds than a dynamic mike. The tradeoff is that capacitor mikes have a built-in preamp to boost the electrical signal, which is why they tend to cost more than dynamic mikes and require power to work.

That power typically comes in the form of 48-volt phantom power, which is typically provided by a soundboard and some professional camcorders. There are also some condenser mikes that have their own external power supply, so that the output can be either balanced (XLR) or unbalanced (¼" or ⅛").

Electret microphones are a type of capacitor microphone. The difference is that most electret mikes use a diaphragm fixed to permanently charged material and in most cases run from an internal battery. These are typically inexpensive lavaliere mikes with sound quality similar to dynamic mikes.

Another type of electret mike is the back electret, where the permanently charged material is fixed to a stationary back plate (not the diaphragm), allowing the use of thinner diaphragms. These mikes can be just as good as capacitor mikes. They will have the battery compartment in either a separate section of the microphone or a separate attachable capsule. Also, backplate electrets can usually be used with phantom power.

FYI

WHAT IS "PHANTOM" POWER?

Phantom power got its name because the voltage travels through the standard balanced (XLR) microphone cabling. With no additional power cables needed, the electricity is a phantom in that mike cable.

PICKUP PATTERNS

For videographers, there are four pickup patterns that are the most useful: omnidirectional, cardioid, supercardioid (or hypercardioid) and lobar (or gun). There are a few mikes, such as the AKG C1000S (cardioid/hypercardioid) and Sennheiser K6 (omnidirectional/cardioid/supercardioid/gun), that allow you to change pickup patterns by adding or changing capsule elements.

An omnidirectional mike has the most basic pickup pattern and will receive equally from all angles. This can be great if you're documenting an event and want all the sound you can get, but in other instances, it may pick up sounds that you don't want.

Audio-Technica ATH-A55 headphones and a Sony shotgun mike.

Cardioid microphones are unidirectional, meaning they have a tighter pickup pattern than omnidirectional mikes. The name cardioid comes from the heart-shaped pickup pattern. The least sensitive spot of a cardioid mike is behind it, so it's a good choice when you want to capture what's in front of and on the sides of the mike.

Supercardioid mikes have a tighter pickup pattern than cardioid mikes and will capture less sound from the sides. As a result, they are ideal for handheld use in noisy ambient environments. (Technically, hypercardioid is tighter than supercardioid.)

Lobar microphones have the tightest pickup pattern, ignoring even more sounds from the side than supercardioid (but not all of the sounds). These are also known as shotgun mikes, used to capture sounds from directly in front of the pickup element. More than half of what you hear in television and film comes from shotgun mikes because they allow fuller, warmer sound by including a nice balance of ambient sound. DV

Michael Silbergleid is the president of The SilverKnight Group, a technology marketing communications company. Contact him at msilbergleid@silverknight.com.

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A BIG SERVE

EDITSHARE OFFERS VERSION 5 OF ITS STORAGE SOLUTION.

BY OLIVER PETERS

This past year, EditShare introduced version 5 software, which added Apple Final Cut Pro project sharing to the portfolio. This places EditShare in the unchallenged position of being the only non-Avid project sharing solution for Avid editors, as well as the only company to offer any sort of sharing for FCP projects.

EXPANDING THE PRODUCT LINE

EditShare storage solutions operate under the Linux operating system with media passing over Gigabit Ethernet (Gig-E). Because editing workstations are direct-connected to the server (or via an Ethernet switch), Gig-E offers enough bandwidth for multiple streams of DV25, as well as uncompressed SD and even compressed HD. Editors working with DVCPRO HD, Apple ProRes 422 or Avid DNxHD are able to work with three to four streams of compressed HD when connected to EditShare storage. For customers needing greater bandwidth, EditShare units can also be configured with 10-Gigabit cards. EditShare systems employ ESA architecture (Extreme Scalable Architecture), so more than 100 users can be connected in the largest system. Individual EditShare products come configured in three variations: the rack unit systems (3RU, 5RU and 8RU units); Metro (a standalone tower, first introduced in the Asia-Pacific region); and EditShare Field (a ruggedized location production model).

Storage capacity ranges from 1.2TB to 3TB in Field to as much as 30TB in an 8RU system. Field is the only shared storage device that I know of specifically geared for film or TV location production. Three editors can be plugged directly into it over Gig-E, and its cube shape ideally fits into airline overhead compartments. All configurations include the server and Ethernet switch. All EditShare systems are RAID 5 protected, which only consumes a small portion of your total storage for the metadata needed to restore media in the event of a drive failure. According to EditShare's specs, a 16-drive EditShare system is capable of writing data at over 450MB/sec, and can read data at over 750MB/sec.

These units currently use SATA (Serial ATA) drives, but they are also developing SAS (Serial Attached SCSI) storage for larger enterprise installations. According to EditShare, a 32-drive SAS configuration should be able to support 80 to 100 streams of DV25, and a 64-drive configuration is currently in testing. Another innovation added in version 5 is the option to create iSCSI partitions.

Technically, EditShare's flavor of storage is Network Attached Storage (NAS). This permits file-level locking, which means more than one user can write to a volume or partition at the same time. Some editing products, like Avid DS Nitris and Digidesign Pro Tools don't entirely work in this environment. They can read from NAS storage, but not write to it. For these applications, the iSCSI option lets the system administrator create a small pool of iSCSI storage within the EditShare media space. This effectively creates a virtual volume-level SAN (Storage Area Network) within the NAS system. Volume-level locking means that only one user has permission to write to that space at any time.

WORKFLOW IS THE KEY

EditShare is run by technology buffs, and that drives the company to investigate open source code programs and improve the products EditShare offers. But if that were the whole story, little would set EditShare apart from the competition. Coming from a "hands-on" production background, EditShare's engineers are driven to provide solutions that address workflow issues. It's more than creating a central pool of storage. Over 90 percent of EditShare's customers use either Avid or Final Cut Pro, so offering them unique collaborative tools provides the edge. Initially, project sharing was only available for Avid Xpress Pro and Media Composer systems. EditShare achieved this by managing the Avid projects on the Linux server. In Avid's own Unity Medianet system, several editors are able to open and work within the same project. Whoever opens a bin first gets permission to write to that bin (i.e., save changes) while all other users just get read-only access. EditShare's Avid project sharing essentially achieves the same functionality by displaying who is the owner of each bin and enforcing write permissions accordingly. As long as a bin is "owned" by User X, Users Y and Z can look at the contents but cannot modify them. Under EditShare's Project Sharing, editors always

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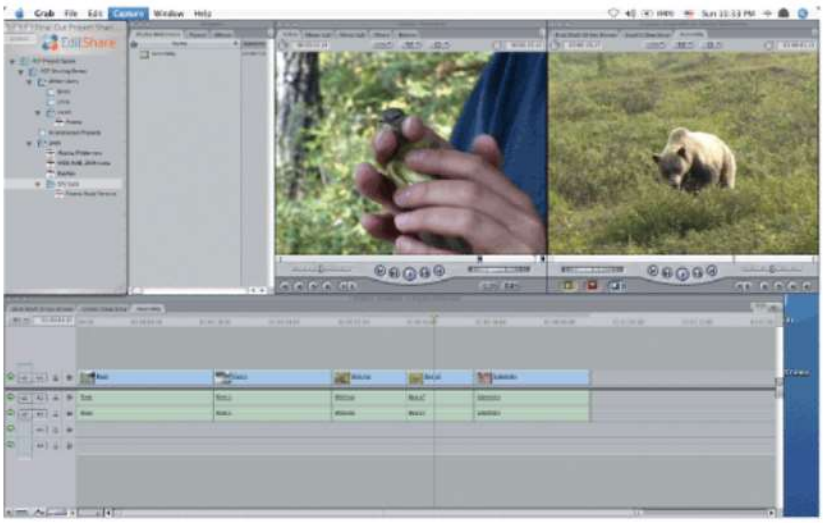

Sharing, editors always have the option of yielding write control to another editor.

Apple's Final Cut Pro doesn't inherently work in the same way, and one of the things Avid editors crossing over to FCP miss is the Unity-style of collaborative editing. Multiple editors working on an Apple XSAN system must send copies of the FCP project file to other editors if they are working concurrently. The "light bulb moment" for EditShare was realizing that FCP project files can really just be used like Avid bin files. Both types of files are where the application stores all of the metadata for the edits. Just as Avid allows you to edit with multiple bins at the same time, FCP permits you to edit with multiple project files open, and you can edit between project files. This ability enabled EditShare to create an Avid-style sharing approach for Final Cut Pro. Shared FCP project files are stored on the Linux server, and control over these files works much the way as it does with EditShare's Avid project sharing. When you first launch the EditShare Project Browser, it also automatically launches FCP. Inside the Browser window — which sits just outside the editing application (unlike EditShare's Avid implementation) — you can see who controls each Final Cut project file. An editor can modify project files under his/her own user name, while files under other user names are read-only. Both approaches are functionally the same, giving editors working on FCP the same benefits of collaboration that Avid editors have enjoyed for years.

FULL ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL

One important difference between EditShare and many competitors is that the administrative software is not charged according to a per-seat license fee. You can install this on as many systems as you like. System administration is handled via a remote desktop application, so management of media spaces and user profiles can be performed from any Ethernet-connected computer, including edit workstations or someone's office system. Naturally, the administrator must have the proper authority and clearance to do this. All EditShare media spaces are virtual volumes or partitions, which can be created, protected, unprotected or dynamically changed at any time. This last feature is important, because if you have a 300GB partition that fills up with media, the administrator can simply increase the size (if the storage is available) and give those editors more scratch disk space in mid project. Administrators can also assign the partitions that a user is able to access and view their material.

SYNCHRONIZATION AND ARCHIVING

EditShare's expansion into multiple connected servers and the introduction of EditShare Field has led them to add a Synchronization Tool. This software application can be used to sync the media between two different servers, such as copying files from Field to an in-house system. It can also be used for automatic backups. Since EditShare is based on Ethernet and IP addresses, backup locations could be across town or even in another country. In this way, the EditShare Synchronization Tool can be used for scheduled archiving, so if RAID 5 protection isn't enough, simply schedule a mirrored backup overnight to a second archive server. With that in mind, EditShare plans to introduce two dedicated archiving solutions. The first would be a less-expensive, commodity server with storage that would be designed strictly for nearline archiving. It wouldn't offer the level of editing performance of a standard EditShare system. The second version would cost a bit more, but offer the full performance of an EditShare server. At any time in the future, the customer could turn this archiving unit into a full-fledged EditShare system by purchasing a dongle upgrade.

I was struck by the little things that EditShare has incorporated. For example, some of their sites are at university film programs, so configuring user profiles each semester for 100 students can take quite a while. To aid in this task, EditShare's software accepts input from Excel-style spreadsheets, making the configuration faster. At the end of a term, the administrator can use the app's "clean slate" tool to reset all the parameters. Typically, partitions are created according to project, so all the media for a given project will be in one location. Deleting the media for a single project is as easy as deleting the associated partition. Like other systems, the administration software can e-mail the administrator with a regular report of system health.

EditShare is certainly marketing in a crowded and competitive space, but they offer the advantage of knowing the customer's production needs. No other company offers Final Cut Pro project sharing as well as an Avid sharing solution. Furthermore, both Avid and FCP systems can co-exist in one ecosystem — a big boon for post houses that have to supply both solutions. DV

SANYO VPC-E1
Digital Media Camcorder
- Waterproof Design, Capable of Recording Full Motion Video 5 ft Underwater for up to 30 Minutes
- 1/2.5" Image Sensor
- 6.37 Megapixel Still Capture
- 5x Optical Zoom Lens
- Electronic Image Stabilization
- SD/SDHC Card Slot
- Up to 80 min. Recording Time per 1GB Memory Card (Opt!)
- Large 2.5" LCD Monitor

#SAVPCE1

SAMSUNG SC-HMX 10
AVCHD Flash Media Camcorder
- Recording 1280 x 720p High-Definition Resolution
- Built-in 8GB Memory and a SD/SDHC/MMC Card Slot
- 1/4.5" CMOS Image Sensor
- 10x Optical, 100x Digital Zoom
- 2.7" Wide Touchscreen LCD
- Built-in LED Light
- External Microphone Input
- USB 2.0 Interface
- HDMI Output

#SASCHMX7 AVCHD

Panasonic VDR-D310
3 CCD DVD Camcorder
- Record to DVD-RAM, DVD-RW, DVD-R, DVD-R DL (Dual Layer) Media
- 3 1/6" Image Sensors
- Leica Dicomar Lens
- Optical Image Stabilization
- 2.7" Wide LCD Monitor
- SD/SDHC Card Slot
- 1 Lux Minimum Illumination in MagicPix Mode
- External Microphone Input
- USB 2.0 Interface

3 MegaPixels

#PAVDRD310

Canon HR10
AVCHD DVD Camcorder
- True HD CMOS Image Sensor (1920 x 1080)
- 1/2.7" Canon CMOS Sensor
- Records DVD-R/-RW/-R DL discs
- DIGIC DV II Image Processing
- Genuine Canon HD Lens
- 10x Optical, 200x Digital Zoom
- RGB Primary Color Filter
- Optical Image Stabilizer
- Instant AF (Auto Focus) for Fast Accurate HD Focusing
- Mini-SD Card Slot

3 MegaPixels

#CAHR10 AVCHD

Canon DC50
DVD Camcorder
- 1/2.7" Image Sensor with 5.39 Megapixels
- Canon Genuine Optics
- 10x Optical, 200x Digital Zoom
- RGB Primary Color Filter
- Optical Image Stabilizer
- Record - DVD-R,-RW, DVD-r (DL)
- Mini-SD/HC Card Slot
- Progressive Photo Mode
- Includes: Roxio MyDVD for Canon Software (DL Supported)
- Built-in Flash w/Red-eye Reduc.

5 MegaPixels

#CADC50

HITACHI DZ-BD7HA
Blu-ray DVD/HDD Camcorder
- High-Definition Recording
- 8 cm BD-RE/-R, DVD-RAM/-RW/-R discs
- Internal 30 GB Hard Disk Drive Records up to 4 hours of full 1920 x 1080 HD video, and up to 8 hours at 1440 x 1080 resolution
- 1/2.8" CMOS Sensor w/5.3 Mp
- SD Card Slot • 2.7" LCD Monitor, Color VF • USB 2.0 / HDMI Output
- External Microphone Input

30 GigaBytes
5 MegaPixels

#HIDZBD7HA

SONY DCR-SR42
Hard Drive Camcorder
- Built-in 30 GB Hard Disc Drive
- 30GB Records: HQ-7 hours, SP-10 hours, LP-20 hours
- HDD 3G Shock Protection
- 1/6 Advanced HAD Image Sensor with 680k Pixels
- 40x Optical, 2000x Digital Zoom
- Carl Zeiss Vario-Tessar Lens
- Memory Stick Duo/PRO Slot
- Super SteadyShot Picture Stabilization System
- 2.5 LCD Monitor

30 GigaBytes

#SODCRSR42 AVCHD

Panasonic HDC-SD5
3 CCD AVCHD Flash Media Camcorder Bundle
- Bundle includes a DVD Burner. Enables the transfer of your video from the camcorder via USB
- 1920 x 1080 Full HD Recording
- Records onto SD/SDHC (high-capacity) Memory Cards
- 3 1/6" CCD image sensors
- Adv. Optical Image Stabilization
- Leica Dicomar Lens
- 2.7" LCD Screen • HDMI Output

#PAHDCSD5 AVCHD

NEW

Panasonic SDR-H60
HDD & SD/SDHC Camcorder
- Internal 60 GB Hard Disc Drive
- SD/SDHC Card Compatibility
- 50x Optical Zoom
- Instant LCD/EVF "Camcorder On" Function
- 2.7" Wide LCD Screen
- Adv. Optical Image Stabilization
- USB 2.0 HS Terminal, USB Host Function
- One Touch Navigation
- VideoCam Suite Editing Software Included

60 GigaBytes

#PASDRH60

SONY HDR-CX7
AVCHD Memory Stick Camcorder
- Record High-Definition Video directly onto Memory Stick Pro Duo Media
- 1/2.9" ClearVID, 3.2k Megapixel CMOS Image Sensor
- x.v. Color Technology Provides More Accurate and Vivid Color
- Carl Zeiss Vario-Sonnar T Lens
- Super SteadyShot Optical Image Stabilization
- HDMI Outputs
- 6.1MP Still Mode Image Capture

6 MegaPixels

#SOHDRCX7 AVCHD

JVC GZ-MG555
HDD & SD/SDHC Camcorder
- Built-in 30GB Hard Drive
- 1/2.5-inch 5.37 Megapixel CCD Pixels Each
- 10x Optical, 300x Zoom Lens
- 3-Dimension Noise Reduction
- Optical Image Stabilization
- Built-in Auto Flash and Video Light
- 2.7" wide LCD with 112k Pixels
- Advanced Photo Functions
- SD/SDHC Memory Card Slot
- Mic Input • HDMI Output

30 GigaBytes
5 MegaPixels

#JVGZMG555

Panasonic AG-HSC1U
3 CCD Pro AVCHD Camcorder
The AG-HSC1U has no tape mechanism, and captures highly-accurate 1080i images onto an SDHC memory card in 16:9 in the new AVCHD format. The Kit includes a 4GB SDHC memory card, and a portable 40GB media storage unit for off-loading content.
- 12X Leica Dicomar Lens
- Smooth, Slow Zoom Control
- Optical Image Stabilizer

#PAAGHSC1U AVCHD

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4 MegaPixels HDV

#SAVPCHD1000

SANYO VPC-HD1000
Xacti High-Definition Flash Media Camcorder
- 1920 x 1080 Full HD and 1280 x 720 Recording (60fps)
- SD/SDHC Memory Card
- 1/2.5" CMOS Image Sensor
- MPEG4 AVC/H.264 Compression
- 2.7" Widescreen LCD Screen
- 10x Optical HD Zoom Lens
- 2-Second Fast Startup to Film
- HDMI & Component Output
- Built-in Flash and Light
- External Microphone Input

#CAGL2

Canon GL2
3-CCD MiniDV Camcorder
- Canon Professional L-Series Fluorite Lens
- 3x 1/4" Image Sensors with 410k Pixels Each
- 20x Optical, 100x Digital Zoom
- Optical Image Stabilization
- SD/MMC Media Card Slot
- Dual XLR Input with Optional MA-300
- Manual Audio Level Control
- Custom User Presets
- Analog/Digital Line-In Rec

60 GigaBytes HD

#JVGZHD7

JVC Everio GZ-HD7
3-CCD HD Hard Drive 1080i Camcorder
- Built-in 60GB Hard Drive
- Full HD (1980x1080) Resolution with Pixel-Shift Technology
- 3x 1/5" Image Sensors with 570k Pixels each
- Fujinon 10x Optical Zoom Lens
- Optical Image Stabilization
- Manual Focus Ring and Focus Assist Function
- SD/SDHC Memory Card Slot
- HDMI Output • HD Software Incl.

#SODCRVX2100

SONY DCR-VX2100
3-CCD MiniDV Camcorder
- 3x 1/3" Advanced HAD CCD with 380K Pixels Each
- Excellent in Low Light (1 Lux)
- Pro Quality Aspherical Lens
- 12x Optical, 48x Digital Zoom
- Optical Image Stabilization
- 2.5" Hybrid Color LCD with 211k Pixels
- Manual Focus, Zoom, Exposure, White Balance, Shutter Speed, Audio Level Controls
- Memory Stick Media Card Slot

3 MegaPixels AVCHD

#CAHG10

Canon HG-10
AVCHD Hard Drive Camcorder
- Internal 40GB Hard Drive-Records 5 1/2 Hrs. of HD Video
- 1/2.7" CMOS HD Image Sensor (1920 x 1080) with RGB Primary Color Filter
- Canon 10x Optical HD Lens
- Optical Image Stabilizer
- DIGIC DV II HD Image Processor
- 24p Cinema Mode
- 2.7 Multi-angle Vivid LCD
- External Microphone Input
- Mini-SD Card Slot

#PAAGDVX100B

Panasonic AG-DVX100B
3-CCD MiniDV Camcorder
- Leica Dicomar Servo/Manual Wide-Angle Lens with Stops and Barrel Markings
- 24P/30P/60i Cinema Recording
- RGB Gamma Processor
- 3x 1/3" I.T. CCD with 410K Pixels
- 10x Optical Zoom and Smooth Cam-Driven Manual Zoom Lens
- Optical Image Stabilization
- Selectable B/W & Color Viewfinder with 235k Pixels
- 3 Customizable User Presets

3 MegaPixels

#SODCRHC96

SONY DCR-HC96
MiniDV Camcorder
- 1/3" Advanced HAD CCD with 3.3 Megapixels
- Primary Color Filter
- Carl Zeiss Vario-Sonnar T Optics
- 10x Optical, 120x Digital Zoom
- Progressive Shutter System
- Super Electronic SteadyShot
- 5 Lux (0 Lx in Super NightShot)
- 2.7" Wide 16:9 LCD w/123k Pixels
- Line In Analog/Dig Recording
- Memory Stick Duo Slot
- Built-in Flash

#SODSRPD170

SONY DSR-PD170
3-CCD DVCAM Camcorder
- Component Digital Recording
- Excellent in Low Light (1 Lux)
- 3x 1/3" Advanced Power-HAD Image Sensor
- 12x Optical, 48x Digital Zoom
- Optical Image Stabilization
- Records DVCAM/DV Formats
- Analog-to-Digital Converter Pass-Through
- Kit Includes: XLR Microphone, Wide Conversion Lens & Hood
- Memory Card Slot

4 MegaPixels

#PAPVGS500

Panasonic PV-GS500
3-CCD MiniDV Camcorder
- 3x 1/4" Image Sensors with 1.07 Megapixels
- 4.0 Megapixel Still Picture Recording to SD Card
- Leica Dicomar Lens
- 12x Optical, 700x Digital Zoom
- Optical Image Stabilization
- Built-in Flash
- Stereo Mini Microphone Input
- 2.7" LCD with 123k Pixels
- FireWire & USB 2.0 Connectivity
- Includes IR Remote & Software

#CAXL2

Canon XL2
3-CCD MiniDV Camcorder
- 3x 1/3" 16:9 Progressive Scan Image Sensors
- Interchangeable Lens System Camera
- 24p/30p/60i Frame Rate Rec.
- L-Series Fluorite Optical Lens
- 20x Optical Zoom Lens Incl.
- 16:9 and 4:3 Switchable
- 2.0" LCD with 200k Pixels
- Color Viewfinder w/200k Pixels
- Dual XLR and One Mini Stereo Microphone Input

#PAAGDVC20

Panasonic AG-DVC20
3-CCD Pro MiniDV Camcorder
- Professional Shoulder Design
- 3-1/6" CCD's with 460k Pixels
- 10X Optical, 500X Digital Zoom
- 1 Lux in Color Night View Mode
- 2.5" Color LCD, and Color EVF
- Stereo Mini Microphone Input
- Manual Focus, Zoom, Iris, Gain, Audio, White Balance, Shutter Speed Controls
- Color Night View Mode Allows Night Shooting
- Smooth Zoom Rocker Control

#SODSR250

Power Optional

SONY DSR-250
3-CCD Pro DVCAM Camcorder
- Accepts Large or Small DV/DVCAM Cassettes
- 3x 1/3" I.T. CCD Sensor
- Component Digital Recording
- Excellent in Low Light (1 Lux)
- 12x Optical, 48x Digital Zoom
- 2.5" Hybrid LCD w/200K Pixels
- Professional 1.5" (DXF-801) B&W Viewfinder)
- Dual XLR Mic Inputs with 48vP
- Analog and Digital I/O

NEW

SONY HDR-HC9
HDV Camcorder
- 1/3" ClearVid, 3.3 Megapixels CMOS Image Sensor
- Shoot 1080i High-Definition
- Carl Zeiss Vario-Sonnar T Lens
- 10x Optical, 20x DigitalZoom
- Super Steadyshot Stabilization
- x.v. Color Processing Technology
- 24f Cinematic "Film-Look" Mode
- NightShot (0 Lux) Record Mode
- Memory Stick PRO Duo Slot
- 2.7" Wide Touch Panel LCD
- HDMI Output

6 MegaPixels HDV

#SOHDRHC9

Canon XH A1
3-CCD Pro HDV Camcorder
- True 1080 High-Definition Resolution Video at 60i, 30F or 24F Frame Rates
- 3x 1/3" Native 16:9 CCD's with 1.67 Megapixels Each
- External AF Sensor for Fast and Accurate Focus in HD
- 20x HD Professional L Series Fluorite Lens
- DIGIC DV II HD Image Processor
- 2.8" Widescreen LCD
- Dual XLR Microphone Inputs

HDV

$250 Mail-In Rebate with Purchase (Expires 12-31-07)

#CAXHA1

Canon HV20
HDV Camcorder
- 1/2.7" True HD CMOS Image Sensor with RGB Filter
- DIGIC DV II Image Processor
- 10x HD Optical, 200x Digital Zoom Lens • HDMI Terminal
- Variable Zoom with 5 Presets
- Optical Image Stabilizer
- Instant AF (Auto Focus) for Fast Accurate Focusing
- 24p Cinema Mode
- Mic/Headphone Terminal
- MiniSD/HC Card Slot

3 MegaPixels HDV

#CAHV20

SONY HVR-V1U
3-CMOS Pro HDV Camcorder
- High-Definition Advanced 1080/24P Pro Camcorder
- 1920 x 1080p Resolution with 4:2:2 Color Space
- Progressive Scan CMOS Sensors Recording 1080/60i/24P/30P
- 3x 1/4" 3-ClearVid CMOS Sensors
- 20x Carl Zeiss Vario-Sonnar T High-Definition Zoom Lens
- Large 3.5" 16:9 LCD
- Dual XLR Microphone Inputs
- HDMI & USB Outputs

HDV

#SOHVRV1U

SONY HVR-HD1000U
Pro Shoulder-mount HDV Camcorder
- HDV 1080i and DV SP/LP recording and playback
- 1/2.9", 3.2 Megapixel CMOS Image Sensor
- Carl Zeiss Vario-Sonnar T* Lens
- Optical Image Stabilization
- Down-Conversion Mode (1080i to SD) • 2.7" LCD
- Memory Stick Duo Slot
- Smooth Slow Rec. Mode with Audio Recording

HDV

#SOHVRHD1000U

SONY HVR-Z1U
3-CCD Pro HDV Camcorder
- 3x 1/3" 16:9 Super HAD 1080i 1.12 Megapixel Image Sensors
- High-Definition 1440x1080 Rec.
- CineFrame 24, 25, 30 Frame Rec
- Carl Zeiss Vario-Sonnar T High-Definition 10x Zoom Lens
- 14-Bit HD DXP • NTSC and PAL
- HDV/DVCAM/DV Recording
- Down Converts HD to SD
- Optical Super SteadyShot
- 3.5" Hybrid 16:9 Widescreen LCD
- Dual XLR Mic Inputs with 48vP

HDV

$300 Mail-In Rebate with Purchase (Expires 3-31-08)

#SOHVRZ1U

SONY HVR-A1U
Pro HDV Camcorder
- HDV 1080i and DV/DVCAM Recording and Playback
- Carl Zeiss Vario-Sonnar T Lens
- 10x Optical Zoom Lens
- 1/3" 16:9 CMOS Image Sensor with 3 Megapixels
- Enhanced Imaging Processor
- 14-bit DXP & A/D Converter
- 2.7" 16:9 Widescreen Hybrid LCD
- Dual XLR Mic Inputs with 48vP
- Memory Stick DUO Slot
- Switchable Clr/B/W Viewfinder

HDV

$300 Mail-In Rebate with Purchase (Expires 3-31-08)

#SOHVRA1U

JVC GY-HD110U
3-CCD Pro HDV Camcorder
- Full HD 24 fps Progressive 720p HD Recording
- 3x 1/3" CCD's with 1280 x 720 Square Pixels
- Interchangeable Lens Mount
- Fujinon Pro 16x Lens Supplied
- Lens Range: 5.5 to 88mm f/1.6
- Advanced 12-bit A/D DSP
- Lux: f/8 @ 2000
- 3.5" LCD Monitor
- Save Camera Settings to SD Cards
- Dual XLR Microphone Inputs

HDV

#JVGYHD110U

NEW

SONY HVR-Z7U
Pro HDV/CF Flash Camcorder
- 3 1/3" ClearVid CMOS Sensors w/Enhanced Exmor Technology
- Interchangeable 1/3" Bayonet Lens Mount
- 1080, 24p and 30p Native Progressive Recording
- CompactFlash Card Slot
- Optical Image Stabilization
- 12x Carl Zeiss Vario-Sonnar T* Lens
- Down-convert HD to SD
- HDMI & i.LINK Interface

HDV

#SOHVRZ7U

Canon XL H1
3-CCD Pro HDV Camcorder
- High-Definition 1440 X 1080 Recording
- SDI 1080i Uncompressed 1920 x 1080 Output
- DIGIC DV II HD Color Processor
- Interchangeable Lens Mount
- 3 1/3" Native 16:9 Image Sensors
- Canon 20x HD O.I.S. Zoom Lens
- Selectable 60i, 30F and 24F Frame Rates
- Dual XLR Mic Inputs with 48vP
- Time Code I/O and Genlock

HDV

#CAXLH1

Panasonic AG-HVX200
3-CCD Pro DVCPRO HD Camcorder
- DVCPRO-100 HD 100Mbps 4:2:2 Recording to P2 Cards
- High-Definition 1080 and 720p Recording to P2 Cards
- Variable Frame Rates
- 3x 1/3" 16:9 Progressive Sensors
- Leica Dicomar HD Lens
- 13x Wide Zoom Lens
- Two P2 Card Slots
- Record DVCPRO 50/25, MiniDV
- 3.5" LCD Monitor

DVCPRO HD

#PAAGHVX200

SONY PMW-EX1
XDCAM EX Solid State High-Definition Camcorder
- SxS Memory Card Recording w/800Mbps Data Transfer
- 1/2-inch Exmor 3 CMOS Sensors
- 1080i/720p Switchable
- Multiple-Frame Recording
- MPEG-2 Long GOP CODEC
- 14x HD Fujinon Lens • 3.5" LCD
- Full Manual Focus Ring
- Over- and Under-cranking
- HD/SD-SDI, Component Out, FireWire I/O, 2x External Mic In

XDCAM EX

#SOPMWEX1

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RULES OF THE GAME

AN INSIDE LOOK AT THE PRODUCTION SERVICES AGREEMENT.

The recent Writers Guild of America strike has left many people in our industry without a paycheck. However, there is one group that has benefited from the strike: producers of reality TV shows. Probably as a result, when I gave my annual legal topics lecture at last December's DV Expo in Los Angeles, I fielded a number of questions from reality TV producers desperate to understand the nuances of their very first television production services agreement. It is to this group that I dedicate this month's column.

Many television companies, such as the Discovery Channel, TLC, Lifetime, and the Smithsonian Network, acquire a good portion of their original programming from independent production companies. The *production services agreement* between the television company and the production company controls both how these programs are produced and what the technical and legal standards are that govern the production.

Let's take a brief look at the most common deal points and clauses found in these agreements. There are others, but these are the most important.

THE PARTIES

The *television company* that comissions the program will be one of the parties to the agreement. Your *production company* will be the other party to the contract. If you have not done so already, you should form a limited liability entity, like an LLC or a Corporation, and have that business entity be a party to the contract, rather than you as an individual. If something goes wrong during the production and the television company decides to sue, it is much better to have your company's assets on the line rather than your own personal assets.

ENGAGEMENT/ PRODUCTION SERVICES

This paragraph outlines the specific duties required by the producer in producing the program. It typically contains:

- The tentative title, subject matter, running time, and delivery date of the program. Often, this section will reference a treatment or script that the production company has pitched to the television company.
- A reference to attached schedule, budget, and production technical and legal specifications.
- A "key person" clause designating a certain production company employee as the executive producer. Note, this is usually a material provision; in other words, it is critical that this designated person be in charge of the production. No substitutions allowed!
- A statement that the production company is responsible for all overages. In other words, if you run over budget, you must fund the difference. To counterbalance this, try to negotiate a provision allowing your company to keep any monies left over, if you bring in the project under budget.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE/ ACQUISITION PRICE

This is the total production budget you will be given. In addition to payment stages and amounts, this will also list conditions that must be fulfilled prior to your getting paid (called *conditions precedent).*

Often, the largest payment, usually one half of the budget or more, will be payable upon execution of the agreement.

The next payment, often a quarter of the budget, will be payable on delivery of the rough cut and production insurance binder.

The final payment is usually withheld until the approval of all deliverables *including* the legal deliverables. I'll explain what these are later in the article.

APPROVALS/REQUIRED ELEMENTS

Part of the production specs, this section will detail those elements over which a television company will reserve the right for prior approval. *Be very careful here:* If the contract requires you to get television company approval over an element, such as the choice of talent, make sure to get that approval prior to hiring that performer! Failure to do so may result in your having to buy that rejected performer out of his contract *and* pay for the approved performer.

Television companies will often require clearances/permissions for and reserve approval rights over the following:

- Above-the-line and below-the-line personnel. This is typically coupled with a requirement that all talent and above the line personnel grant the rights to use their names, likeness, and biographies for marketing and promotional purposes for the program.
- All stories outlines, treatments, scripts, and other materials.
- Photographs, titles, music, rough cut, final cut, and all credit obligations.
- Composer and music licensing agreements. Usually included is a minimum term for which licensed music must be acquired.
- Any product-placement agreements. Such agreements will almost always have to be run by the ad sales department of the television company to avoid sponsor conflicts.
- Any trademarks, copyrights, or other intellectual-property-protected materials shown in the program.

This article has been prepared for educational and information purposes only and is not legal advice or legal opinion. Only your attorney can advise you which laws are applicable to your specific case and situation.

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- Permissions from all persons shown on camera.

With regards to permissions and clearances, it is important to keep in mind the difference between permissions required by law and those required by contract.

Example: You may have filmed some people walking in the background on a city street as part of your B-roll footage. Generally, people do not have a right of privacy over noncommercial uses of their images filmed while they are on a public street. As a result, you may not be *legally* required to get a release from people incidentally shown walking down the sidewalk. However, your production services agreement will almost certainly have a *contractual* requirement that you obtain a written release from every person photographed and shown in the program. From a practical standpoint, this is unwieldy. The solution? Get your production attorney involved. Have him or her put a call into the legal affairs attorney at the television company and negotiate a waiver of your appearance release requirement for a particular sequence. Failure to do so could possibly result in you being noncompliant with your legal deliverable requirements and delay your final payment.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO KEEP IN MIND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PERMISSIONS REQUIRED BY LAW AND THOSE REQUIRED BY CONTRACT.

DELIVERY REQUIREMENTS

Be prepared to adhere to a rather lengthy schedule of technical and legal deliverables. This section specifies:

TECHNICAL

- The length of the program, including where the commercial breaks must occur.
- Media on which program, elements, and soundtrack must be delivered.
- Soundtrack mixing requirements and cue sheets.
- Specifications for promotional and marketing deliverables. Note: These are often due to the television company prior to the program being delivered. Be sure to stick closely to the exact technical specifications demanded by the television company. That being said, there may be a lot of boilerplate language here, requiring you to deliver such outdated items as 35mm slides when a hi-res JPEG might just as easily do the trick. Be sure to look for, point out, and change any antiquated delivery requirements before you sign the contract.

LEGAL

Brace yourself: You will have to deliver a legal binder containing all of your talent and crew contracts, releases, permissions, and credit requirements.

- The program must be compliant with the company's standards and practices policies. Practice tip: Some companies don't maintain written standards and practices policies, which makes it very hard for the producer to know what it's agreeing to under this clause.
- Lien, security, and copyright assignment documents are often required; these forms are usually supplied to the production company by the television company.
- Publicity restrictions and requirements. The production company is typically restrained from issuing any publicity without the prior written approval of the television company.
- Representations and warranties: These are statements of fact and promises that one party makes to another with the intention that the other party will rely upon them. Representations and warranties are usually coupled with an indemnification clause requiring a party who has misrepresented something to pay the other party's damages that stem from the misrepresentation. The production company typically reps and warrants that:
  - It has all the rights it is granting, and it will not infringe upon any other rights holder in the making of the production.
  - There is no libelous, defamatory, or obscene material in the program.
  - It will be responsible for all royalties and reuse payments.
  - It has not exhibited the program anywhere else (including festivals) and its first exhibition on the television company's channel is the program's premier.
  - Pursuant to federal regulations, the production company has not accepted any money, services, or other compensation in exchange for advertising goods or services in the program (unless it has prior approval from the television company).

Of course, your production services agreement will also contain other standard contract clauses, such as notice, arbitration, jurisdiction, *force majeure,* and much more.

Remember, a contract can be amended and changed many times during the course of a production. During the production, if you feel that you will have difficulty meeting a particular requirement, let the television company know as soon as possible. You may be pleasantly surprised to find out how reasonable they can be... after all, they want to make the program, too. However, if you wait until delivering your program to let them know that you didn't comply, payment may be withheld, and you may be faced with a breach-of-contract suit. DV

Mr. Crowell concentrates his law practice in the areas of entertainment and intellectual-property law. Portions of this article were taken from Mr. Crowell's new book The Pocket Lawyer for Filmmakers, *published by Focal Press. He may be reached at www.thomascrowell.com.*

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